



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



00004322964



THE ACADEMY SERIES OF
ENGLISH CLASSICS

PR
2807
A2T5



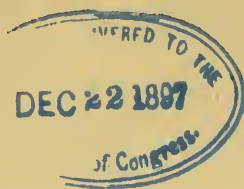
SHAKESPEARE
HAMLET

EDITED BY
S. THURBER



ALLYN AND BACON

1/6 Shakspeare

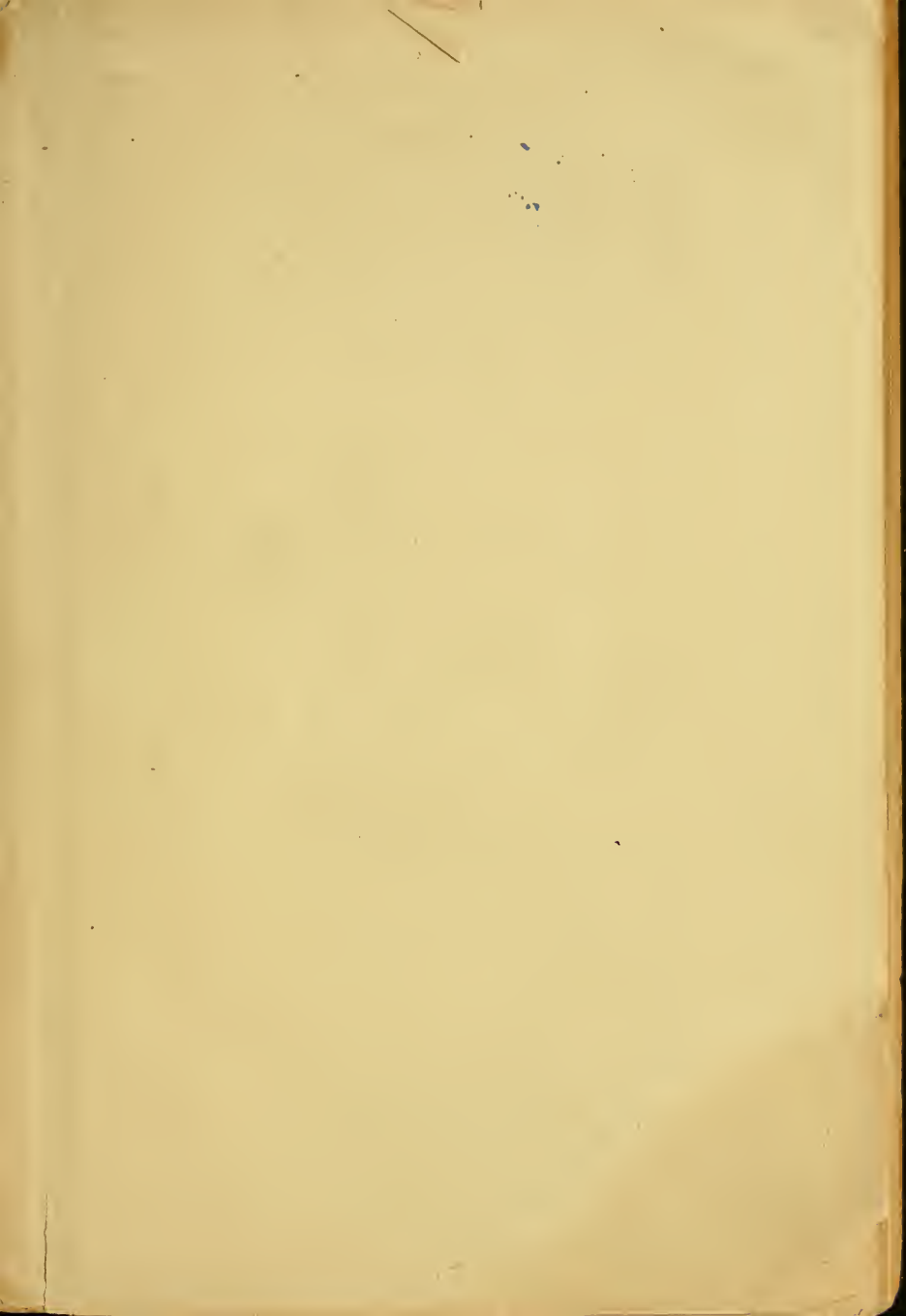


LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

PK2807
Chap. Copyright No.

Shelf *A2T5*

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.





✓
The Academy Series of English Classics

✓
SHAKESPEARE, William

HAMLET

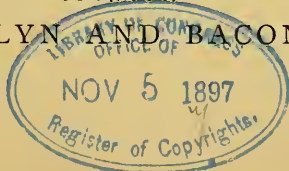
PRINCE OF DENMARK

EDITED BY

SAMUEL THURBER

Boston

ALLYN AND BACON



54076022

TWO COPIES RECEIVED

PR 2807
.A2 T5

COPYRIGHT, 1897, BY
SAMUEL THURBER.

12-37530

Typography by J. S. Cushing & Co., Norwood, Mass.
Presswork by H. M. Plimpton & Co., Printers and Binders, Norwood, Mass.

PREFACE.

IN preparing notes to explain the text of Hamlet I have followed my usual practice of seeking to help the teacher by helping the pupil. Working absolutely without help, the young reader makes his way through our English classics too slowly and laboriously, toiling in vain over details, and so failing to get large impressions. Above all things, the school must keep the study of English literature interesting, or else the school practically belies the very end and aim of the subject it professes to teach. All the poets and the prose writers have striven to interest their contemporaries and their posterity. The classics are those who succeeded and still succeed in this endeavor; the great classics are those who have succeeded in a pre-eminent degree.

Hence, whatever else, in a school course, a strenuous discipline may, for training's sake, insist on keeping hard and dry, the English literature must ever be tempered with the warmth of liking and curiosity. The primal relation of literature to the mind is an appeal for attention, an effort to stimulate, to please. We cannot lose sight of this truth and treat poetry as if it were science, which we can absolutely withdraw from and view as an objective thing.

The human questions, of character and motive, of conscience and remorse, that arise in every Shakespearian

play, and especially in Hamlet, must, to inexperienced readers, be made accessible in spite of the obscurities of the language, and must be shown to have literary and historical relations of far-reaching importance. For it is to be said that the young reader, while he is by certain difficulties checked and perplexed, slips unconsciously over others, careful study of which might bring to him a rich reward. What we are wont to call the recitation,—a function that too often is little else than a process of questioning about matters committed to memory, the teacher had better fill with conversation, eliciting from as many individuals as possible avowals of belief or doubt. The tests of success in the teaching of classic literature are these: Does the great writer exert over the youth we have instructed something of the power legitimately due to his greatness? Do we bring it to pass that to the adolescent mind the modern homage paid to the ancient poet seems a natural and intelligible phenomenon? Do we at least succeed in implanting in our pupils a curiosity about Shakespeare which in some individuals may, with maturer years, expand into a Shakespeare-reading habit?

Whoever at the present day, in elucidation of Hamlet, offers edification by the margin, has to begin with acknowledgement of his indebtedness to Furness' *Variorum*. The Hamlet literature, long too vast for any but a specialist, has found its competent specialist and master in Furness, whose edition of the play makes it, for the average student, absolutely needless to go further in research. I wish the Furness Hamlet were larger than it is, could the additional pages be occupied by fur-

ther original comment—such as we have learned to search for in the crowded notes—from Mr. Furness' own pen.

The text here printed is that of the Cambridge, with occasional divergence,—when authority seemed sufficient,—for the sake of giving a more natural reading, and with such slight omissions of lines as the educational purpose of the edition suggested. The line-numbering is that of the Globe Shakespeare, thus facilitating reference to Bartlett's Concordance and to Schmidt's Lexicon.

HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

CLAUDIUS, king of Denmark.	FRANCISCO, a soldier.
HAMLET, son to the late, and nephew to the present king.	REYNALDO, servant to Polonius.
POLONIUS, lord chamberlain.	Players.
HORATIO, friend to Hamlet.	Two Clowns, Grave-diggers.
LAERTES, son to Polonius.	FORTINBRAS, prince of Norway.
VOLTIMAND,	A Captain.
CORNELIUS,	English Ambassadors.
ROSENCRANTZ,	GERTRUDE, queen of Denmark, and mother to Hamlet.
GUILDENSTERN,	OPHELIA, daughter to Polonius.
OSRIC,	Lords, Ladies, Officers, Soldiers, Sailors, Messengers, and other Attendants.
A Gentleman,	Ghost of Hamlet's Father.
A Priest.	SCENE : <i>Denmark.</i>
MARCELLUS,	
BERNARDO,	

ACT I.

SCENE I. *Elsinore. A platform before the castle.*

FRANCISCO *at his post.* Enter to him BERNARDO.

Ber. Who's there ?

Fran. Nay, answer me : stand, and unfold yourself.

Ber. Long live the king !

Fran. Bernardo ?

Ber. He.

Fran. You come most carefully upon your hour.

Ber. 'Tis now struck twelve ; get thee to bed, Francisco.

Fran. For this relief much thanks : 't is bitter cold,
And I am sick at heart.

Ber. Have you had quiet guard ?

Fran. Not a mouse stirring. 10

Ber. Well, good night.

If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus,
The rivals of my watch, bid them make haste.

Fran. I think I hear them. Stand, ho ! Who's
there ?

Enter HORATIO and MARCELLUS.

Hor. Friends to this ground. 15

Mar. And liegemen to the Dane.

Fran. Give you good night.

Mar. O, farewell, honest soldier :

Who hath relieved you ?

Fran. Bernardo has my place.

Give you good night. [*Exit.*

Mar. Holla ! Bernardo !

Ber. Say,

What, is Horatio there ?

Hor. A piece of him.

Ber. Welcome, Horatio : welcome, good Marcellus. 20

Mar. What, has this thing appeared again to-night ?

Ber. I have seen nothing.

Mar. Horatio says 't is but our fantasy,
And will not let belief take hold of him
Touching this dreaded sight, twice seen of us : 25
Therefore I have entreated him along
With us to watch the minutes of this night ;
That if again this apparition come,
He may approve our eyes and speak to it.

Hor. Tush, tush, 't will not appear.

Ber. Sit down awhile; 30

And let us once again assail your ears,
That are so fortified against our story
What we have two nights seen.

Hor. Well, sit we down,
And let us hear Bernardo speak of this.

Ber. Last night of all, 35
When yond same star that's westward from the pole
Had made his course to illume that part of heaven
Where now it burns, Marcellus and myself,
The bell then beating one, —

Enter Ghost.

Mar. Peace, break thee off; look, where it comes
again! 40

Ber. In the same figure, like the king that's dead.

Mar. Thou art a scholar; speak to it, Horatio.

Ber. Looks it not like the king? mark it, Horatio.

Hor. Most like: it harrows me with fear and wonder.

Ber. It would be spoke to.

Mar. Question it, Horatio. 45

Hor. What art thou that usurp'st this time of night,
Together with that fair and warlike form
In which the majesty of buried Denmark
Did sometimes march? by heaven I charge thee, speak!

Mar. It is offended.

Ber. See, it stalks away! 50

Hor. Stay! speak, speak! I charge thee, speak!

[*Exit Ghost.*

Mar. 'Tis gone, and will not answer.

Ber. How now, Horatio! you tremble and look pale:

Is not this something more than fantasy ?

What think you on 't ? 55

Hor. Before my God, I might not this believe
Without the sensible and true avouch
Of mine own eyes.

Mar. Is it not like the king ?

Hor. As thou art to thyself :

Such was the very armor he had on 60

When he the ambitious Norway combated ;
So frowned he once, when, in an angry parle,
He smote the sledded Polacks on the ice :

'Tis strange.

Mar. Thus twice before, and jump at this dead hour,
With martial stalk hath he gone by our watch. 66

Hor. In what particular thought to work I know not ;
But in the gross and scope of my opinion,
This bodes some strange eruption to our state.

Mar. Good now, sit down, and tell me he that knows,
Why this same strict and most observant watch 71

So nightly toils the subject of the land,
And why such daily cast of brazen cannon,
And foreign mart for implements of war ;
Why such impress of shipwrights, whose sore task 75
Does not divide the Sunday from the week ;
What might be toward, that this sweaty haste
Doth make the night joint-laborer with the day :
Who is 't that can inform me ?

Hor. That can I ;

At least, the whisper goes so. Our last king, 80
Whose image even but now appeared to us,
Was, as you know, by Fortinbras of Norway,
Thereto pricked on by a most emulate pride,

Dared to the combat; in which our valiant Hamlet —
For so this side of our known world esteemed him — 85
Did slay this Fortinbras; who, by a sealed compact,
Well ratified by law and heraldry,
Did forfeit, with his life, all those his lands
Which he stood seized of, to the conqueror:
Against the which, a moiety competent 90
Was gaged by our king; which had returned
To the inheritance of Fortinbras,
Had he been vanquisher; as, by the same covenant,
And carriage of the article designed,
His fell to Hamlet. Now, sir, young Fortinbras, 95
Of unimproved mettle hot and full,
Hath in the skirts of Norway here and there
Sharked up a list of lawless resolute,
For food and diet, to some enterprise
That hath a stomach in't; which is no other — 100
As it doth well appear unto our state —
But to recover of us, by strong hand
And terms compulsory, those foresaid lands
So by his father lost: and this, I take it,
Is the main motive of our preparations, 105
The source of this our watch and the chief head
Of this post-haste and romage in the land.

Ber. I think it be no other but e'en so:
Well may it sort that this portentous figure
Comes armed through our watch; so like the king 110
That was and is the question of these wars.

Hor. A mote it is to trouble the mind's eye.
In the most high and palmy state of Rome,
A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,
The graves stood tenantless and the sheeted dead 115

Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets :
 As stars with trains of fire and dews of blood,
 Disasters in the sun ; and the moist star
 Upon whose influence Neptune's empire stands
 Was sick almost to doomsday with eclipse : 120
 And even the like precursor of fierce events,
 As harbingers preceding still the fates
 And prologue to the omen coming on,
 Have heaven and earth together demonstrated
 Unto our climatures and countrymen. — 125
 But soft, behold ! lo, where it comes again !

Re-enter Ghost.

I'll cross it, though it blast me. Stay, illusion !
 If thou hast any sound, or use of voice,
 Speak to me :
 If there be any good thing to be done, 130
 That may to thee do ease and grace to me,
 Speak to me : *[Cock crows.*
 If thou art privy to thy country's fate,
 Which, happily, foreknowing may avoid,
 O, speak ! 135
 Or if thou hast uphoarded in thy life
 Extorted treasure in the womb of earth,
 For which, they say, you spirits oft walk in death,
 Speak of it : stay, and speak ! Stop it, Marcellus.
Mar. Shall I strike at it with my partisan ? 140
Hor. Do, if it will not stand.
Ber. 'T is here !
Hor. 'T is here !
Mar. 'T is gone ! *[Exit Ghost.*
 We do it wrong, being so majestical,

To offer it the show of violence ;
For it is, as the air, invulnerable, 145
And our vain blows malicious mockery.

Ber. It was about to speak, when the cock crew.

Hor. And then it started like a guilty thing
Upon a fearful summons. I have heard,
The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn, 150
Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat
Awake the god of day ; and, at his warning,
Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,
The extravagant and erring spirit hies
To his confine : and of the truth herein 155
This present object made probation.

Mar. It faded on the crowing of the cock.
Some say that ever 'gainst that season comes
Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,
The bird of dawning singeth all night long : 160
And then, they say, no spirit dares stir abroad ;
The nights are wholesome ; then no planets strike,
No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm,
So hallowed and so gracious is the time.

Hor. So have I heard and do in part believe it. 165
But, look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill :
Break we our watch up ; and by my advice,
Let us impart what we have seen to-night
Unto young Hamlet ; for, upon my life, 170
This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him.
Do you consent we shall acquaint him with it,
As needful in our loves, fitting our duty ?

Mar. Let's do't, I pray ; and I this morning know
Where we shall find him most conveniently. [*Exeunt.* 175

SCENE II. *A room of state in the castle.*

*Enter the KING, QUEEN, HAMLET, POLONIUS, LAERTES,
VOLTIMAND, CORNELIUS, Lords, and Attendants.*

King. Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death
The memory be green, and that it us befitted
To bear our hearts in grief and our whole kingdom
To be contracted in one brow of woe,
Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature 5
That we with wisest sorrow think on him,
Together with remembrance of ourselves.
Therefore our sometime sister, now our queen,
The imperial jointress to this warlike state,
Have we, as 't were with a defeated joy, — 10
With one auspicious and one dropping eye,
With mirth in funeral and with dirge in marriage,
In equal scale weighing delight and dole, —
Taken to wife: nor have we herein barred
Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone 15
With this affair along. For all, our thanks.
Now follows, that you know, young Fortinbras,
Holding a weak supposal of our worth,
Or thinking by our late dear brother's death
Our state to be disjoint and out of frame, 20
Collegued with the dream of his advantage,
He hath not failed to pester us with message,
Importing the surrender of those lands
Lost by his father, with all bonds of law,
To our most valiant brother. So much for him. 25
Now for ourself and for this time of meeting:
This much the business is: we have here writ

To Norway, uncle of young Fortinbras, —
 Who, impotent and bed-rid, scarcely hears
 Of this his nephew's purpose, — to suppress 30
 His further gait herein; in that the levies,
 The lists and full proportions, are all made
 Out of his subject: and we here dispatch
 You, good Cornelius, and you, Voltimand,
 For bearers of this greeting to old Norway; 35
 Giving to you no further personal power
 To business with the king, more than the scope
 Of these dilated articles allow.
 Farewell, and let your haste commend your duty.

Cor. }
Vol. } In that and all things will we show our duty. 40

King. We doubt it nothing: heartily farewell.
 [*Exeunt Voltimand and Cornelius.*]

And now, Laertes, what's the news with you?
 You told us of some suit; what is 't, Laertes?
 You cannot speak of reason to the Dane,
 And lose your voice: what wouldst thou beg, Laertes, 45
 That shall not be my offer, not thy asking?
 The head is not more native to the heart,
 The hand more instrumental to the mouth,
 Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.
 What wouldst thou have, Laertes?

Laer. My dread lord, 50
 Your leave and favor to return to France;
 From whence though willingly I came to Denmark,
 To show my duty in your coronation,
 Yet now, I must confess, that duty done,
 My thoughts and wishes bend again toward France 55
 And bow them to your gracious leave and pardon.

King. Have you your father's leave? What says Polonius?

Pol. He hath, my lord, wrung from me my slow leave

By laborsome petition, and at last
Upon his will I sealed my hard consent: 60
I do beseech you, give him leave to go.

King. Take thy fair hour, Laertes; time be thine,
And thy best graces spend it at thy will!

But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son, —

Ham. [*Aside*] A little more than kin, and less than kind. 65

King. How is it that the clouds still hang on you?

Ham. Not so, my lord; I am too much i' the sun.

Queen. Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted color off,
And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.
Do not forever with thy vailed lids 70
Seek for thy noble father in the dust:
Thou know'st 't is common: all that lives must die,
Passing through nature to eternity.

Ham. Ay, madam, it is common.

Queen. If it be,

Why seems it so particular with thee? 75

Ham. Seems, madam! nay, it is; I know not 'seems.'
'T is not alone my inky cloak, good mother,
Nor customary suits of solemn black,
Nor windy suspiration of forced breath,
No, nor the fruitful river in the eye, 80
Nor the dejected 'havior of the visage,
Together with all forms, moods, shapes of grief,
That can denote me truly: these indeed seem,
For they are actions that a man might play:

But I have that within which passeth show ; 85
These but the trappings and the suits of woe.

King. 'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature,
Hamlet,

To give these mourning duties to your father :
But, you must know, your father lost a father ;
That father lost, lost his, and the survivor bound 90
In filial obligation for some term

To do obsequious sorrow : but to persevere
In obstinate condolment is a course
Of impious stubbornness ; 't is unmanly grief ;
It shows a will most incorrect to heaven, 95

A heart unfortified, a mind impatient,
An understanding simple and unschooled :
For what we know must be and is as common
As any the most vulgar thing to sense,
Why should we in our peevish opposition 100

Take it to heart ? Fie ! 't is a fault to heaven,
A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,
To reason most absurd ; whose common theme
Is death of fathers, and who still hath cried,
From the first corse till he that died to-day, 105

'This must be so.' We pray you, throw to earth
This unprevailing woe, and think of us
As of a father : for let the world take note,
You are the most immediate to our throne ;
And with no less nobility of love 110

Than that which dearest father bears his son,
Do I impart toward you. For your intent
In going back to school in Wittenberg,
It is most retrograde to our desire :
And we beseech you, bend you to remain 115

Here, in the cheer and comfort of our eye,
Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.

Queen. Let not thy mother lose her prayers, Hamlet :
I pray thee, stay with us ; go not to Wittenberg.

Ham. I shall in all my best obey you, madam. 120

King. Why, 't is a loving and a fair reply :
Be as ourself in Denmark. Madam, come ;
This gentle and unforced accord of Hamlet
Sits smiling to my heart : in grace whereof,
No jocund health that Denmark drinks to-day, 125
But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell,
And the king's rouse the heavens shall bruit again,
Re-speaking earthly thunder. Come away.

[*Exeunt all but Hamlet.*]

Ham. O, that this too too solid flesh would melt,
Thaw and resolve itself into a dew ! 130
Or that the Everlasting had not fixed
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter ! O God ! God !
How weary, stale, flat and unprofitable,
Seem to me all the uses of this world !
Fie on 't ! ah fie ! 't is an unweeded garden, 135
That grows to seed ; things rank and gross in nature
Possess it merely. That it should come to this !
But two months dead : nay, not so much, not two :
So excellent a king ; that was, to this,
Hyperion to a satyr ; so loving to my mother 140
That he might not beteem the winds of heaven
Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth !
Must I remember ? why, she would hang on him,
As if increase of appetite had grown
By what it fed on : and yet, within a month — 145
Let me not think on 't — Frailty, thy name is woman ! —

A little month, or ere those shoes were old
 With which she followed my poor father's body,
 Like Niobe, all tears: — why she, even she —
 O God! a beast, that wants discourse of reason, 150
 Would have mourned longer — married with my uncle,
 My father's brother, but no more like my father
 Than I to Hercules: within a month:
 Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears
 Had left the flushing in her galled eyes, 155
 She married. O, most wicked speed, to post
 With such dexterity to incestuous sheets!
 It is not nor it cannot come to good:
 But break my heart; for I must hold my tongue.

Enter HORATIO, MARCELLUS, and BERNARDO.

Hor. Hail to your lordship! 160

*Ham.*¹ I am glad to see you well:
 Horatio, — or do I forget myself.

Hor. The same, my lord, and your poor servant
 ever.

Ham. Sir, my good friend; I'll change that name
 with you:

And what make you from Wittenberg, Horatio?

Marcellus? 165

Mar. My good lord —

Ham. I am very glad to see you. Good even, sir.
 But what, in faith, make you from Wittenberg?

Hor. A truant disposition, good my lord.

Ham. I would not hear your enemy say so, 170
 Nor shall you do mine ear that violence,
 To make it truster of your own report
 Against yourself: I know you are no truant.

But what is your affair in Elsinore ?

We 'll teach you to drink deep ere you depart. 175

Hor. My lord, I came to see your father's funeral.

Ham. I pray thee, do not mock me, fellow-student ;
I think it was to see my mother's wedding.

Hor. Indeed, my lord, it followed hard upon.

Ham. Thrift, thrift, Horatio ! the funeral baked
meats 180

Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.

Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven

Or ever I had seen that day, Horatio !

My father ! — methinks I see my father.

Hor. Where, my lord ?

Ham. In my mind's eye, Horatio. 185

Hor. I saw him once ; he was a goodly king.

Ham. He was a man, take him for all in all,
I shall not look upon his like again.

Hor. My lord, I think I saw him yesternight.

Ham. Saw ? who ? 190

Hor. My lord, the king, your father.

Ham. The king my father !

Hor. Season your admiration for a while

With an attent ear, till I may deliver,

Upon the witness of these gentlemen,

This marvel to you.

Ham. For God's love, let me hear. 195

Hor. Two nights together had these gentlemen,
Marcellus and Bernardo, on their watch,
In the dead vast and middle of the night,
Been thus encountered. A figure like your father,
Armed at point exactly, cap-a-pe, 200
Appears before them, and with solemn march

Goes slow and stately by them : thrice he walked
 By their oppressed and fear-surprised eyes,
 Within his truncheon's length ; whilst they, distilled
 Almost to jelly with the act of fear, 205
 Stand dumb and speak not to him. This to me
 In dreadful secrecy impart they did ;
 And I with them the third night kept the watch :
 Where, as they had delivered, both in time,
 Form of the thing, each word made true and good, 210
 The apparition comes : I knew your father ;
 These hands are not more like.

Ham. But where was this ?

Mar. My lord, upon the platform where we watched.

Ham. Did you not speak to it ?

Hor. My lord, I did ;

But answer made it none : yet once methought 215
 It lifted up its head and did address
 Itself to motion, like as it would speak ;
 But even then the morning cock crew loud,
 And at the sound it shrunk in haste away,
 And vanished from our sight.

Ham. 'T is very strange. 220

Hor. As I do live, my honored lord, 't is true ;
 And we did think it writ down in our duty
 To let you know of it.

Ham. Indeed, indeed, sirs, but this troubles me.
 Hold you the watch to-night ? 225

Mar. }

Ber. }

We do, my lord.

Ham. Armed, say you ?

Mar. }

Ber. }

Armed, my lord.

Ham. From top to toe ?

Mar. }
Ber. } My lord, from head to foot.

Ham. Then saw you not his face ?

Hor. O, yes, my lord ; he wore his beaver up. 230

Ham. What, looked he frowningly ?

Hor. A countenance more in sorrow than in anger.

Ham. Pale or red ?

Hor. Nay, very pale.

Ham. And fixed his eyes upon you ?

Hor. Most constantly. 235

Ham. I would I had been there.

Hor. It would have much amazed you.

Ham. Very like, very like. Stayed it long ?

Hor. While one with moderate haste might tell a hundred.

Mar. }
Ber. } Longer, longer.

Hor. Not when I saw 't.

Ham. His beard was grizzled, — no ? 240

Hor. It was, as I have seen it in his life,
A sable silvered.

Ham. I will watch to-night ;
Perchance 't will walk again.

Hor. I warrant it will.

Ham. If it assume my noble father's person,
I'll speak to it though hell itself should gape 245
And bid me hold my peace. I pray you all,
If you have hitherto concealed this sight,
Let it be tenable in your silence still ;
And whatsoever else shall hap to-night,
Give it an understanding, but no tongue : 250

I will requite your loves. So, fare you well :
 Upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve,
 I'll visit you.

All. Our duty to your honor.

Ham. Your loves, as mine to you : farewell.

[*Exeunt all but Hamlet.*

My father's spirit in arms ! all is not well ; 255
 I doubt some foul play : would the night were come !
 Till then sit still, my soul : foul deeds will rise,
 Though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to men's eyes.

[*Exit.*

SCENE III. *A room in Polonius' house.*

Enter LAERTES and OPHELIA.

Laer. My necessities are embarked : farewell :
 And, sister, as the winds give benefit
 And convoy is assistant, do not sleep,
 But let me hear from you.

Oph. Do you doubt that ?

Laer. For Hamlet and the trifling of his favor, 5
 Hold it a fashion and a toy in blood,
 A violet in the youth of primy nature,
 Forward, not permanent, sweet, not lasting,
 The perfume and suppliance of a minute ;
 No more. 10

Oph. No more but so ?

Laer. Think it no more :
 For nature, crescent, does not grow alone
 In thews and bulk, but, as this temple waxes,
 The inward service of the mind and soul
 Grows wide withal. Perhaps he loves you now,

And now no soil nor cautel doth besmirch 15
The virtue of his will: but you must fear,
His greatness weighed, his will is not his own;
For he himself is subject to his birth:
He may not, as unvalued persons do,
Carve for himself; for on his choice depends 20
The safety and the health of this whole state;
And therefore must his choice be circumscribed
Unto the voice and yielding of that body
Whereof he is the head. Then if he says he loves you,
It fits your wisdom so far to believe it 25
As he in his particular act and place
May give his saying deed; which is no further
Than the main voice of Denmark goes withal.
Then weigh what loss your honor may sustain,
If with too credent ear you list his songs, 30
Or lose your heart, or your chaste treasure open
To his unmastered importunity.
Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister,
And keep you in the rear of your affection, .
Out of the shot and danger of desire. 35
The chariest maid is prodigal enough,
If she unmask her beauty to the moon:
Virtue itself 'scapes not calumnious strokes:
The canker galls the infants of the spring,
Too oft before their buttons be disclosed, 40
And in the morn and liquid dew of youth
Contagious blastments are most imminent.
Be wary then; best safety lies in fear:
Youth to itself rebels, though none else near.
Oph. I shall the effect of this good lesson keep, 45
As watchman to my heart. But, good my brother,

Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,
Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven ;
Whiles, like a puffed and reckless libertine,
Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads, 50
And recks not his own rede.

Laer. O, fear me not.
I stay too long: but here my father comes.

Enter POLONIUS.

A double blessing is a double grace ;
Occasion smiles upon a second leave.

Pol. Yet here, Laertes! aboard, aboard, for shame! 55
The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,
And you are stayed for. There; my blessing with thee!
And these few precepts in thy memory
See thou character. Give thy thoughts no tongue,
Nor any unproportioned thought his act. 60
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar.
Those friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel ;
But do not dull thy palm with entertainment
Of each new-hatched, unfledged comrade. Beware 65
Of entrance to a quarrel, but being in,
Bear 't that the opposed may beware of thee.
Give every man thy ear, but few thy voice ;
Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgement.
Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy, 70
But not expressed in fancy ; rich, not gaudy ;
For the apparel oft proclaims the man,
And they in France of the best rank and station
Are most select and generous in that.
Neither a borrower nor a lender be ; 75

For loan oft loses both itself and friend,
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.
This above all: to thine own self be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man. 80

Farewell: my blessing season this in thee!

Laer. Most humbly do I take my leave, my lord.

Pol. The time invites you; go; your servants tend.

Laer. Farewell, Ophelia; and remember well
What I have said to you. 85

Oph. 'T is in my memory locked,
And you yourself shall keep the key of it.

Laer. Farewell. [*Exit.*

Pol. What is 't, Ophelia, he hath said to you?

Oph. So please you, something touching the Lord
Hamlet.

Pol. Marry, well bethought: 90
'T is told me, he hath very oft of late
Given private time to you; and you yourself
Have of your audience been most free and bounteous:
If it be so, as so 't is put on me,
And that in way of caution, I must tell you, 95
You do not understand yourself so clearly
As it behoves my daughter and your honor.
What is between you? give me up the truth.

Oph. He hath, my lord, of late made many tenders
Of his affection to me. 100

Pol. Affection! pooh! you speak like a green girl,
Unsifted in such perilous circumstance.
Do you believe his tenders, as you call them?

Oph. I do not know, my lord, what I should think.

Pol. Marry, I 'll teach you: think yourself a baby; 105

That you have ta'en these tenders for true pay,
Which are not sterling. Tender yourself more dearly;
Or — not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,
Running it thus — you 'll tender me a fool.

Oph. My lord, he hath importuned me with love 110
In honorable fashion.

Pol. Ay, fashion you may call it; go to, go to.

Oph. And hath given countenance to his speech, my
lord,

With almost all the holy vows of heaven.

Pol. Ay, springes to catch woodcocks. I do know, 115
When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul
Lends the tongue vows: these blazes, daughter,
Giving more light than heat, extinct in both,
Even in their promise, as it is a-making,
You must not take for fire. From this time 120
Be somewhat scanter of your maiden presence;
Set your entreatments at a higher rate
Than a command to parley. For Lord Hamlet,
Believe so much in him, that he is young,
And with a larger tether may he walk 125
Than may be given you: in few, Ophelia,
Do not believe his vows; for they are brokers,
Not of that dye which their investments show,
But mere implorators of unholy suits,
Breathing like sanctified and pious bawds, 130
The better to beguile. This is for all:
I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth,
Have you so slander any moment's leisure,
As to give words or talk with the Lord Hamlet.
Look to 't, I charge you: come your ways. 135

Oph. I shall obey, my lord.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *The platform.**Enter HAMLET, HORATIO, and MARCELLUS.**Ham.* The air bites shrewdly; it is very cold.*Hor.* It is a nipping and an eager air.*Ham.* What hour now?*Hor.* I think it lacks of twelve.*Ham.* No, it is struck.*Hor.* Indeed? I heard it not: then it draws near the
season 5

Wherein the spirit held his wont to walk.

[A flourish of trumpets, and ordnance shot off, within.]

What does this mean, my lord?

Ham. The king doth wake to-night and takes his rouse,
Keeps wassail, and the swaggering up-spring reels;
And, as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down, 10
The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out
The triumph of his pledge.*Hor.* Is it a custom?*Ham.* Ay, marry, is 't:But to my mind, though I am native here
And to the manner born, it is a custom 15
More honored in the breach than the observance.
This heavy-headed revel east and west
Makes us traduced and taxed of other nations:
They clepe us drunkards, and with swinish phrase
Soil our addition; and indeed it takes 20
From our achievements, though performed at height,
The pith and marrow of our attribute.
So, oft it chances in particular men,
That for some vicious mole of nature in them,

As, in their birth — wherein they are not guilty, 25
Since nature cannot choose his origin —
By the o'ergrowth of some complexion,
Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason,
Or by some habit that too much o'er-leavens
The form of plausible manners, that these men, 30
Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect,
Being nature's livery, or fortune's star, —
Their virtues else — be they as pure as grace,
As infinite as man may undergo —
Shall in the general censure take corruption 35
From that particular fault: the dram of eale
Doth all the noble substance of a doubt
To his own scandal.

Hor. Look, my lord, it comes!

Enter Ghost.

Ham. Angels and ministers of grace defend us!
Be thou a spirit of health or goblin damned, 40
Bring with thee airs from heaven or blasts from hell,
Be thy intents wicked or charitable,
Thou comest in such a questionable shape
That I will speak to thee: I'll call thee Hamlet,
King, father, royal Dane: O, answer me! 45
Let me not burst in ignorance; but tell
Why thy canonized bones, hearsed in death,
Have burst their cerements; why the sepulchre,
Wherein we saw thee quietly inurned,
Hath oped his ponderous and marble jaws, 50
To cast thee up again. What may this mean,
That thou, dead corse, again in complete steel
Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,

Making night hideous ; and we fools of nature
So horridly to shake our disposition 55
With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls ?
Say, why is this ? wherefore ? what should we do ?

[*Ghost beckons Hamlet.*

Hor. It beckons you to go away with it,
As if it some impartment did desire
To you alone. 60

Mar. Look, with what courteous action
It waves you to a more removed ground :
But do not go with it.

Hor. No, by no means.

Ham. It will not speak ; then I will follow it.

Hor. Do not, my lord.

Ham. Why, what should be the fear ?
I do not set my life at a pin's fee ; 65
And for my soul, what can it do to that,
Being a thing immortal as itself ?
It waves me forth again : I 'll follow it.

Hor. What if it tempt you toward the flood, my lord,
Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff 70
That beetles o'er his base into the sea,
And there assume some other horrible form,
Which might deprive your sovereignty of reason
And draw you into madness ? think of it :
The very place puts toys of desperation, 75
Without more motive, into every brain
That looks so many fathoms to the sea
And hears it roar beneath.

Ham. It waves me still.
Go on ; I 'll follow thee.

Mar. You shall not go, my lord. 80

Ham. Hold off your hands.

Hor. Be ruled ; you shall not go.

Ham. My fate cries out,
And makes each petty artery in this body
As hardy as the Nemean lion's nerve.
Still am I called. Unhand me, gentlemen.
By heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that lets me! 85
I say, away! Go on: I'll follow thee.

[*Exeunt Ghost and Hamlet.*]

Hor. He waxes desperate with imagination.

Mar. Let 's follow; 't is not fit thus to obey him.

Hor. Have after. To what issue will this come?

Mar. Something is rotten in the state of Denmark. 90

Hor. Heaven will direct it.

Mar. Nay, let 's follow him. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V. *Another part of the platform.*

Enter GHOST and HAMLET.

Ham. Where wilt thou lead me? speak; I'll go no further.

Ghost. Mark me.

Ham. I will.

Ghost. My hour is almost come,
When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames
Must render up myself.

Ham. Alas, poor ghost!

Ghost. Pity me not, but lend thy serious hearing 5
To what I shall unfold.

Ham. Speak; I am bound to hear.

Ghost. So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt hear.

Ham. What?

Ghost. I am thy father's spirit,
Doomed for a certain term to walk the night, 10
And for the day confined to fast in fires,
Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature
Are burnt and purged away. But that I am forbid
To tell the secrets of my prison-house,
I could a tale unfold whose lightest word 15
Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young blood,
Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres,
Thy knotted and combined locks to part
And each particular hair to stand an end,
Like quills upon the fretful porpentine : 20
But this eternal blazon must not be
To ears of flesh and blood. List, list, O, list
If thou didst ever thy dear father love —

Ham. O God !

Ghost. Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder.

Ham. Murder ! 26

Ghost. Murder most foul, as in the best it is ;
But this most foul, strange and unnatural.

Ham. Haste me to know 't, that I, with wings as
swift
As meditation or the thoughts of love, 30
May sweep to my revenge.

Ghost. I find thee apt ;
And duller shouldst thou be than the fat weed
That roots itself in ease on Lethe wharf,
Wouldst thou not stir in this. Now, Hamlet, hear :
'T is given out that, sleeping in my orchard, 35
A serpent stung me ; so the whole ear of Denmark
Is by a forged process of my death
Rankly abused : but know, thou noble youth,

The serpent that did sting thy father's life
Now wears his crown.

Ham. O my prophetic soul ! 40
My uncle !

Ghost. Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate beast,
With witchcraft of his wit, with traitorous gifts, —
O wicked wit and gifts, that have the power 45
So to seduce ! — won to his shameful lust
The will of my most seeming-virtuous queen :
O Hamlet, what a falling-off was there !
From me, whose love was of that dignity
That it went hand in hand even with the vow 50
I made to her in marriage, and to decline
Upon a wretch whose natural gifts were poor
To those of mine !

But virtue, as it never will be moved,
Though lewdness court it in a shape of heaven,
So lust, though to a radiant angel linked, 55
Will sate itself in a celestial bed,
And prey on garbage.

But, soft ! methinks I scent the morning air ;
Brief let me be. Sleeping within my orchard,
My custom always in the afternoon, 60
Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole,
With juice of cursed hebenon in a vial,
And in the porches of my ears did pour
The leperous distilment ; whose effect
Holds such an enmity with blood of man 65
That swift as quicksilver it courses through
The natural gates and alleys of the body,
And with a sudden vigor it doth posset
And curd, like eager droppings into milk,



The thin and wholesome blood: so did it mine; 70
And a most instant tetter barked about,
Most lazar-like, with vile and loathsome crust,
All my smooth body.

Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand
Of life, of crown, of queen, at once dispatched: 75
Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,

Unhouseled, disappointed, unaneled,
No reckoning made, but sent to my account
With all my imperfections on my head:
O, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible! 80

If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not;
Let not the royal bed of Denmark be
A couch for luxury and damned incest.

But, howsoever thou pursuest this act,
Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive 85
Against thy mother aught: leave her to heaven
And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge,
To prick and sting her. Fare thee well at once!

The glow-worm shows the matin to be near,
And 'gins to pale his uneffectual fire: 90
Adieu, adieu! Hamlet, remember me.

[*Exit.*

Ham. O all you host of heaven! O earth! what else?
And shall I couple hell? O, fie! Hold, hold, my heart;
And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,
But bear me stiffly up. Remember thee! 95

Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
In this distracted globe. Remember thee!
Yea, from the table of my memory
I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,
All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past, 100
That youth and observation copied there;

And thy commandment all alone shall live
 Within the book and volume of my brain,
 Unmixed with baser matter : yes, by heaven !
 O most pernicious woman ! 105
 O villain, villain, smiling, damned villain !
 My tables, — meet it is I set it down,
 That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain ;
 At least I 'm sure it may be so in Denmark : [*Writing.*
 So, uncle, there you are. Now to my word ; 110
 It is 'Adieu, adieu ! remember me.'
 I have sworn 't.

Mar. } [*Within*] My lord, my lord, —
Hor. }

Mar. [*Within*] Lord Hamlet, —

Hor. [*Within*] Heaven secure him !

Ham. So be it !

Hor. [*Within*] Hillo, ho, ho, my lord !

Ham. Hillo, ho, ho, boy ! come, bird, come. 115

Enter HORATIO and MARCELLUS.

Mar. How is 't, my noble lord ?

Hor. What news, my lord ?

Ham. O, wonderful !

Hor. Good my lord, tell it.

Ham. No ; you 'll reveal it.

Hor. Not I, my lord, by heaven. 120

Mar. Nor I, my lord.

Ham. How say you, then ; would heart of man once
 think it ?

But you 'll be secret ?

Hor. }
Mar. } Ay, by heaven, my lord.

Ham. There's ne'er a villain dwelling in all Denmark
But he's an arrant knave.

Hor. There needs no ghost, my lord, come from the
grave 125
To tell us this.

Ham. Why, right; you are i' the right;
And so, without more circumstance at all,
I hold it fit that we shake hands and part:
You, as your business and desire shall point you;
For every man has business and desire, 130
Such as it is; and for mine own poor part,
Look you, I'll go pray.

Hor. These are but wild and whirling words, my lord.

Ham. I'm sorry they offend you, heartily;
Yes, 'faith, heartily.

Hor. There's no offence, my lord. 135

Ham. Yes, by Saint Patrick, but there is, Horatio,
And much offence too. Touching this vision here,
It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you:
For your desire to know what is between us,
O'ermaster 't as you may. And now, good friends, 140
As you are friends, scholars and soldiers,
Give me one poor request.

Hor. What is 't, my lord? we will.

Ham. Never make known what you have seen to-night.

Hor. } My lord, we will not. 145
Mar. }

Ham. Nay, but swear 't,

Hor. In faith,
My lord, not I.

Mar. Nor I, my lord, in faith.

Ham. Upon my sword.

Mar. We have sworn, my lord, already.

Ham. Indeed, upon my sword, indeed.

Ghost. [*Beneath*] Swear.

Ham. Ah, ha, boy! say'st thou so? art thou there,
truepenny? 150

Come on — you hear this fellow in the cellarage —
Consent to swear.

Hor. Propose the oath, my lord.

Ham. Never to speak of this that you have seen,
Swear by my sword.

Ghost. [*Beneath*] Swear. 155

Ham. Hic et ubique? then we'll shift our ground.
Come hither, gentlemen,

And lay your hands again upon my sword:

Never to speak of this that you have heard,

Swear by my sword. 160

Ghost. [*Beneath*] Swear.

Ham. Well said, old mole! canst work i' the earth so
fast?

A worthy pioner! Once more remove, good friends.

Hor. O day and night, but this is wondrous strange!

Ham. And therefore as a stranger give it welcome.
There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, 166
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

But come;

Here, as before, never, so help you mercy,

How strange or odd soe'er I bear myself, 170

As I perchance hereafter shall think meet

To put an antic disposition on,

That you, at such times seeing me, never shall,

With arms encumbered thus, or this head-shake,

Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase, 175

As 'Well, well, we know,' or 'We could, an if we would,'
 Or 'If we list to speak,' or 'There be, an if they might,'
 Or such ambiguous giving out, to note
 That you know aught of me: this not to do,
 So grace and mercy at your most need help you, 180
 Swear.

Ghost. [*Beneath*] Swear.

Ham. Rest, rest, perturbed spirit! [*They swear.*]

So, gentlemen,
 With all my love I do commend me to you:
 And what so poor a man as Hamlet is 185
 May do, to express his love and friending to you,
 God willing, shall not lack. Let us go in together;
 And still your fingers on your lips, I pray.
 The time is out of joint: O cursed spite,
 That ever I was born to set it right! 190
 Nay, come, let's go together. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I. *A room in Polonius' house.*

Enter POLONIUS *and* REYNALDO.

Pol. Give him this money and these notes, Reynaldo.

Rey. I will, my lord.

Pol. You shall do marvellous wisely, good Reynaldo,
 Before you visit him, to make inquire
 Of his behavior. 5

Rey. My lord, I did intend it.

Pol. Marry, well said; very well said. Look you, sir,
 Inquire me first what Danskers are in Paris;
 And how, and who, what means, and where they keep,
 What company, at what expense; and finding

By this encompassment and drift of question 10
That they do know my son, come you more nearer
Than your particular demands will touch it:
Take you, as 't were, some distant knowledge of him;
As thus, 'I know his father and his friends,
And in part him:' do you mark this, Reynaldo? 15

Rey. Ay, very well, my lord.

Pol. 'And in part him; but' you may say 'not well:
But, if 't be he I mean, he's very wild;
Addicted so and so:' and there put on him
What forgeries you please; marry, none so rank 20
As may dishonor him; take heed of that;
But, sir, such wanton, wild and usual slips
As are companions noted and most known
To youth and liberty.

Rey. As gaming, my lord.

Pol. Ay, or drinking, fencing, swearing, quarrelling,
Drabbing: you may go so far. 26

Rey. My lord, that would dishonor him.

Pol. 'Faith, no; as you may season it in the charge.
You must not put another scandal on him,
That he is open to incontinency; 30
That's not my meaning: but breathe his faults so quaintly
That they may seem the taints of liberty,
The flash and outbreak of a fiery mind,
A savageness in unreclaimed blood,
Of general assault.

Rey. But, my good lord, —

Pol. Wherefore should you do this?

Rey. Ay, my lord,
I would know that.

Pol. Marry, sir, here's my drift;

And, I believe, it is a fetch of warrant:
You laying these slight sullies on my son,
As 't were a thing a little soiled i' the working, 40
Mark you,
Your party in converse, him you would sound,
Having ever seen in the prenominate crimes
The youth you breathe of guilty, be assured
He closes with you in this consequence; 45
'Good sir,' or so, or 'friend,' or 'gentleman,'
According to the phrase or the addition
Of man and country.

Rey. Very good, my lord.

Pol. And then, sir, does he this — he does — what was
I about to say? By the mass, I was about to say some-
thing: where did I leave? 51

Rey. At 'closes in the consequence,' at 'friend or so,'
and 'gentleman.'

Pol. At 'closes in the consequence,' ay, marry;
He closes thus: 'I know the gentleman; 55
I saw him yesterday, or t' other day,
Or then, or then; with such, or such; and, as you say,
There was a' gaming; there o'ertook in's rouse;
There falling out at tennis: ' or perchance,
'I saw him enter such a house of sale,' 60
Videlicet, a brothel, or so forth.

See you now;

Your bait of falsehood takes this carp of truth:
And thus do we of wisdom and of reach,
With windlasses and with assays of bias, 65
By indirections find directions out:
So by my former lecture and advice,
Shall you my son. You have me, have you not?

Rey. My lord, I have.

Pol. God be wi' you ; fare you well.

Rey. Good my lord ! 70

Pol. Observe his inclination in yourself.

Rey. I shall, my lord.

Pol. And let him ply his music.

Rey. Well, my lord.

Pol. Farewell ! [*Exit Reynaldo.*]

Enter OPHELIA.

How now, Ophelia ! what 's the matter ?

Oph. O, my lord, my lord, I have been so affrighted !

Pol. With what, i' the name of God ? 76

Oph. My lord, as I was sewing in my closet,
Lord Hamlet, with his doublet all unbraced ;
No hat upon his head ; his stockings fouled,
Ungartered and down-gyved to his ancle ; 80
Pale as his shirt ; his knees knocking each other ;
And with a look so piteous in purport
As if he had been loosed out of hell
To speak of horrors, — he comes before me.

Pol. Mad for thy love ? 85

Oph. My lord, I do not know ;
But truly, I do fear it.

Pol. What said he ?

Oph. He took me by the wrist and held me hard ;
Then goes he to the length of all his arm ;
And, with his other hand thus o'er his brow,
He falls to such perusal of my face 90
As he would draw it. Long stayed he so ;
At last, a little shaking of mine arm
And thrice his head thus waving up and down,

He raised a sigh so piteous and profound
 That it did seem to shatter all his bulk 95
 And end his being: that done, he lets me go:
 And, with his head over his shoulder turned,
 He seemed to find his way without his eyes;
 For out o' doors he went without their help,
 And, to the last, bended their light on me. 100

Pol. Come, go with me: I will go seek the king.
 This is the very ecstasy of love,
 Whose violent property fordoes itself
 And leads the will to desperate undertakings
 As oft as any passion under heaven 105
 That does afflict our natures. I am sorry.
 What, have you given him any hard words of late?

Oph. No, my good lord, but, as you did command,
 I did repel his letters and denied
 His access to me. 110

Pol. That hath made him mad.
 I am sorry that with better heed and judgement
 I had not quoted him: I feared he did but trifle,
 And meant to wreck thee; but, beshrew my jealousy!
 By heaven, it is as proper to our age
 To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions 115
 As it is common for the younger sort
 To lack discretion. Come, go we to the king:
 This must be known; which, being kept close, might
 move
 More grief to hide than hate to utter love. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *A room in the castle.*

Enter KING, QUEEN, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, and Attendants.

King. Welcome, dear Rosencrantz and Guildenstern !
Moreover that we much did long to see you,
The need we have to use you did provoke
Our hasty sending. Something have you heard
Of Hamlet's transformation ; so call it, 5
Sith nor the exterior nor the inward man
Resembles that it was. What it should be,
More than his father's death, that thus hath put him
So much from the understanding of himself,
I cannot dream of : I entreat you both, 10
That being of so young days brought up with him,
And sith so neighbored to his youth and humor
That you vouchsafe your rest here in our court
Some little time : so by your companies
To draw him on to pleasures, and to gather, 15
So much as from occasion you may glean,
Whether aught, to us unknown, afflicts him thus,
That, opened, lies within our remedy.

Queen. Good gentlemen, he hath much talked of you ;
And sure I am two men there are not living 20
To whom he more adheres. If it will please you
To show us so much gentry and good will
As to expend your time with us awhile,
For the supply and profit of our hope,
Your visitation shall receive such thanks 25
As fits a king's remembrance.

Ros.

Both your majesties

Might, by the sovereign power you have of us,
Put your dread pleasures more into command
Than to entreaty.

Guil. But we both obey,
And here give up ourselves, in the full bent 30
To lay our service freely at your feet,
To be commanded.

King. Thanks, Rosencrantz and gentle Guildenstern.

Queen. Thanks, Guildenstern and gentle Rosencrantz.
And I beseech you instantly to visit 35
My too much changed son. Go, some of you,
And bring these gentlemen where Hamlet is.

Guil. Heavens make our presence and our practices
Pleasant and helpful to him!

Queen. Ay, amen!

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, and some Attendants.*]

Enter POLONIUS.

Pol. The ambassadors from Norway, my good lord, 40
Are joyfully returned.

King. Thou still hast been the father of good news.

Pol. Have I, my lord? I assure you, my good
liege,
I hold my duty, as I hold my soul,
Both to my God, and to my gracious king : 45
And I do think, or else this brain of mine
Hunts not the trail of policy so sure
As it hath used to do, that I have found
The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy.

King. O, speak of that; that do I long to hear. 50

Pol. Give first admittance to the ambassadors;
My news shall be the fruit to that great feast.

King. Thyself do grace to them, and bring them in.

[*Exit Polonius.*]

He tells me, my dear Gertrude he hath found
The head and source of all your son's distemper. 55

Queen. I doubt it is no other but the main;
His father's death, and our o'erhasty marriage.

King. Well, we shall sift him.

Re-enter POLONIUS, with VOLTIMAND and CORNELIUS.

Welcome, my good friends!

Say, Voltimand, what from our brother Norway?

Volt. Most fair return of greetings and desires. 60

Upon our first, he sent out to suppress
His nephew's levies; which to him appeared
To be a preparation 'gainst the Polack;
But, better looked into, he truly found
It was against your highness: whereat grieved, 65

That so his sickness, age and impotence
Was falsely borne in hand, sends out arrests
On Fortinbras; which he, in brief, obeys;
Receives rebuke from Norway, and in fine
Makes vow before his uncle never more 70

To give the assay of arms against your majesty.
Whereon old Norway, overcome with joy,
Gives him three thousand crowns in annual fee,
And his commission to employ those soldiers,
So levied as before, against the Polack: 75

With an entreaty, herein further shown, [*Giving a paper.*]
That it might please you to give quiet pass
Through your dominions for his enterprise,
On such regards of safety and allowance
As therein are set down. 80

King. It likes us well ;
 And at our more considered time we 'll read,
 Answer, and think upon this business.
 Meantime we thank you for your well-took labor :
 Go to your rest ; at night we 'll feast together ;
 Most welcome home !

85

[*Exeunt Voltimand and Cornelius.*

Pol. This business is well ended.
 My liege, and madam, to expostulate
 What majesty should be, what duty is,
 Why day is day, night night, and time is time,
 Were nothing but to waste night, day and time.
 Therefore, since brevity is the soul of wit,
 And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,
 I will be brief: your noble son is mad :
 Mad call I it; for, to define true madness,
 What is 't but to be nothing else but mad ?
 But let that go.

90

95

Queen. More matter, with less art.

Pol. Madam, I swear I use no art at all.
 That he is mad, 't is true: 't is true 't is pity ;
 And pity 't is 't is true: a foolish figure ;
 But farewell it, for I will use no art.
 Mad let us grant him, then : and now remains
 That we find out the cause of this effect,
 Or rather say, the cause of this defect,
 For this effect defective comes by cause :
 Thus it remains, and the remainder thus.
 Perpend.

100

105

I have a daughter — have while she is mine —
 Who, in her duty and obedience, mark,
 Hath given me this: now gather, and surmise. [*Reads.*

‘To the celestial and my soul’s idol, the most beautified Ophelia,’ — 110

That’s an ill phrase, a vile phrase; ‘beautified’ is a vile phrase: but you shall hear. Thus: [*Reads.*

‘In her excellent white bosom, these, &c.’

Queen. Came this from Hamlet to her?

Pol. Good madam, stay awhile; I will be faithful. 115
[*Reads.*

‘Doubt thou the stars are fire;
Doubt that the sun doth move;
Doubt truth to be a liar;
But never doubt I love.

‘O dear Ophelia, I am ill at these numbers; I have not art to reckon my groans: but that I love thee best, O most best, believe it. Adieu. 122

‘Thine evermore, most dear lady, whilst this machine is to him, HAMLET.’

This, in obedience, hath my daughter shown me, 125
And more above, hath his solicitings,
As they fell out by time, by means and place,
All given to mine ear.

King. But how hath she
Received his love?

Pol. What do you think of me?

King. As of a man faithful and honorable. 130

Pol. I would fain prove so. But what might you think,

When I had seen this hot love on the wing —
As I perceived it, I must tell you that,
Before my daughter told me — what might you,
Or my dear majesty your queen here, think, 135
If I had played the desk or table-book,

Or given my heart a winking, mute and dumb,
 Or looked upon this love with idle sight;
 What might you think? No, I went round to work,
 And my young mistress thus I did bespeak: 140
 'Lord Hamlet is a prince, out of thy star;
 This must not be:' and then I precepts gave her,
 That she should lock herself from his resort,
 Admit no messengers, receive no tokens.
 Which done, she took the fruits of my advice; 145
 And he, repulsed — a short tale to make —
 Fell into a sadness, then into a fast,
 Thence to a watch, thence into a weakness,
 Thence to a lightness, and, by this declension,
 Into the madness wherein now he raves, 150
 And all we mourn for.

King. Do you think 't is this?

Queen. It may be, very likely.

Pol. Hath there been such a time — I'd fain know
 that —

That I have positively said 'T is so,'
 When it proved otherwise? 155

King. Not that I know.

Pol. [*Pointing to his head and shoulder*] Take this
 from this, if this be otherwise:

If circumstances lead me, I will find
 Where truth is hid, though it were hid indeed
 Within the centre.

King. How may we try it further?

Pol. You know, sometimes he walks four hours 160
 together

Here in the lobby.

Queen. So he does indeed.

Pol. At such a time I'll loose my daughter to him :
Be you and I behind an arras then ;
Mark the encounter : if he love her not
And be not from his reason fallen thereon, 165
Let me be no assistant for a state,
But keep a farm and carters.

King. We will try it.

Queen. But, look, where sadly the poor wretch comes
reading.

Pol. Away, I do besecch you, both away :
I'll board him presently.

[*Exeunt King, Queen, and Attendants.*]

Enter HAMLET reading.

O, give me leave : 170
How does my good Lord Hamlet ?

Ham. Well, God-a-mercy.

Pol. Do you know me, my lord ?

Ham. Excellent well ; you are a fishmonger.

Pol. Not I, my lord. 175

Ham. Then I would you were so honest a man.

Pol. Honest, my lord !

Ham. Ay, sir ; to be honest, as this world goes, is to
be one man picked out of ten thousand.

Pol. That's very true, my lord. 180

Ham. For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog,
being a god kissing carrion, — Have you a daughter ?

Pol. I have, my lord.

Ham. Let her not walk i' the sun : friend look to 't.

Pol. [*Aside*] How say you by that ? Still harping
on my daughter : yet he knew me not at first ; he said I
was a fishmonger : he is far gone, far gone : and truly in

my youth I suffered much extremity for love ; very near this. I'll speak to him again. What do you read, my lord ? 193

Ham. Words, words, words.

Pol. What is the matter, my lord ?

Ham. Between who ?

Pol. I mean, the matter that you read, my lord. 197

Ham. Slanders, sir : for the satirical rogue says here that old men have grey beards, that their faces are wrinkled, their eyes purging thick amber and plum-tree gum and that they have a plentiful lack of wit, together with most weak hams : all which, sir, though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet I hold it not honesty to have it thus set down, for yourself, sir, should be old as I am, if like a crab you could go backward. 206

Pol. [*Aside*] Though this be madness, yet there is method in 't. Will you walk out of the air, my lord ?

Ham. Into my grave.

Pol. Indeed, that is out o' the air. [*Aside*] How pregnant sometimes his replies are ! a happiness that often madness hits on, which reason and sanity could not so prosperously be delivered of. I will leave him, and suddenly contrive the means of meeting between him and my daughter. — My honorable lord, I will most humbly take my leave of you. 218

Ham. You cannot, sir, take from me any thing that I will more willingly part withal : except my life, except my life, except my life.

Pol. Fare you well, my lord.

Ham. These tedious old fools !

Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

Pol. You go to seek the Lord Hamlet; there he is.

Ros. [*To Polonius*] God save you, sir! 225

[*Exit Polonius.*]

Guil. My honored lord!

Ros. My most dear lord!

Ham. My excellent good friends! How dost thou, Guildenstern? Ah, Rosencrantz! Good lads, how do ye both? 230

Ros. As the indifferent children of the earth.

Guil. Happy, in that we are not over-happy;
On fortune's cap we are not the very button.

Ham. Nor the soles of her shoe?

Ros. Neither, my lord.

Ham. What's the news? 240

Ros. None, my lord, but that the world's grown honest.

Ham. Then is doomsday near: but your news is not true. Let me question more in particular: what have you, my good friends, deserved at the hands of fortune, that she sends you to prison hither? 246

Guil. Prison, my lord!

Ham. Denmark's a prison.

Ros. Then is the world one. 250

Ham. A goodly one; in which there are many confines, wards and dungeons, Denmark being one o' the worst.

Ros. We think not so, my lord.

Ham. Why, then, 'tis none to you; for there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so: to me it is a prison. 257

Ros. Why then, your ambition makes it one; 't is too narrow for your mind.

Ham. O God, I could be bounded in a nutshell and count myself a king of infinite space, were it not that I have bad dreams. 262

Guil. Which dreams indeed are ambition, for the very substance of the ambitious is merely the shadow of a dream. 265

Ham. A dream itself is but a shadow.

Ros. Truly, and I hold ambition of so airy and light a quality that it is but a shadow's shadow.

Ham. Then are our beggars bodies, and our monarchs and outstretched heroes the beggars' shadows. Shall we to the court? for, by my fay, I cannot reason. 272

Ros. }
Guil. } We'll wait upon you.

Ham. No such matter: I will not sort you with the rest of my servants, for, to speak to you like an honest man, I am most dreadfully attended. But, in the beaten way of friendship, what make you at Elsinore? 278

Ros. To visit you, my lord; no other occasion.

Ham. Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks; but I thank you: and sure, dear friends, my thanks are too dear a halfpenny. Were you not sent for? Is it your own inclining? Is it a free visitation? Come, deal justly with me: come, come; nay, speak. 285

Guil. What should we say, my lord?

Ham. Why, any thing, but to the purpose. You were sent for; and there is a kind of confession in your looks which your modesties have not craft enough to color: I know the good king and queen have sent for you. 291

Ros. To what end, my lord?

Ham. That you must teach me. But let me conjure you, by the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy of our youth, by the obligation of our ever-preserved love, and by what more dear a better proposer could charge you withal, be even and direct with me, whether you were sent for, or no.

Ros. [*Aside to Guil.*] What say you? 300

Ham. [*Aside*] Nay, then, I have an eye of you. — If you love me, hold not off.

Guil. My lord, we were sent for.

Ham. I will tell you why; so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the king and queen moult no feather. I have of late — but wherefore I know not — lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises; and indeed it goes so heavily with my disposition that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory, this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o’erhanging firmament, this majestic roof fretted with golden fire, why, it appears no other thing to me than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapors. What a piece of work is a man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust? man delights not me: no, nor woman neither, though by your smiling you seem to say so. 323

Ros. My lord, there was no such stuff in my thoughts.

Ham. Why did you laugh then, when I said ‘man delights not me’?

Ros. To think, my lord, if you delight not in man, what lenten entertainment the players shall receive from

you: we coted them on the way; and hither are they coming, to offer you service. 331

Ham. He that plays the king shall be welcome; his majesty shall have tribute of me; the adventurous knight shall use his foil and target; the lover shall not sigh gratis; the humorous man shall end his part in peace; the clown shall make those laugh whose lungs are tickled o' the sere; and the lady shall say her mind freely, or the blank verse shall halt for 't. What players are they? 340

Ros. Even those you were wont to take delight in, the tragedians of the city.

Ham. How chances it they travel? their residence, both in reputation and profit, was better both ways. 345

Ros. I think their inhibition comes by the means of the late innovation.

Ham. Do they hold the same estimation they did when I was in the city? are they so followed? 350

Ros. No, indeed, are they not.

Ham. How comes it? do they grow rusty?

Ros. Nay, their endeavor keeps in the wonted pace: but there is, sir, an aery of children, little eyases, that cry out on the top of question, and are most tyrannically clapped for 't: these are now the fashion, and so berattle the common stages — so they call them — that many wearing rapiers are afraid of goose-quills and dare scarce come hither. 360

Ham. What, are they children? who maintains 'em? how are they escoted? Will they pursue the quality no longer than they can sing? will they not say afterwards, if they should grow themselves to common players — as it is most like, if their means are no better — their

writers do them wrong, to make them exclaim against their own succession? 368

Ros. 'Faith, there has been much to do on both sides; and the nation holds it no sin to tarre them to controversy: there was, for a while, no money bid for argument, unless the poet and the player went to cuffs in the question. 373

Ham. Is 't possible?

Guil. O, there has been much throwing about of brains. 376

Ham. Do the boys carry it away?

Ros. Ay, that they do, my lord; Hercules and his load too.

Ham. It is not very strange; for mine uncle is king of Denmark, and those that would make mows at him while my father lived, give twenty, forty, fifty, an hundred ducats a-piece for his picture in little. 'Sblood, there is something in this more than natural, if philosophy could find it out. 385

[*Flourish of trumpets within.*]

Guil. There are the players.

Ham. Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore. Your hands, come then: the appurtenance of welcome is fashion and ceremony: let me comply with you in this garb, lest my extent to the players, which, I tell you, must show fairly outward, should more appear like entertainment than yours. You are welcome: but my uncle-father and aunt-mother are deceived.

Guil. In what, my dear lord? 395

Ham. I am but mad north-north-west: when the wind is southerly I know a hawk from a handsaw.

Enter POLONIUS.

Pol. Well be with you, gentlemen!

Ham. Hark you, Guildenstern; and you too: at each ear a hearer: that great baby you see there is not yet out of his swaddling-elouts. 401

Ros. Happily he's the second time come to them; for they say an old man is twice a child.

Ham. I will prophesy he comes to tell me of the players; mark it. — You say right, sir: o' Monday morning; 't was so indeed. 407

Pol. My lord, I have news to tell you.

Ham. My lord, I have news to tell you. When Roscius was an actor in Rome, — 410

Pol. The actors are come hither, my lord.

Ham. Buz, buz!

Pol. Upon mine honor, —

Ham. Then came each actor on his ass, —

Pol. The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral, scene individable, or poem unlimited: Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light. For the law of writ and the liberty, these are the only men. 421

Ham. O Jephthah, judge of Israel, what a treasure hadst thou!

Pol. What a treasure had he, my lord?

Ham. Why, 425

‘One fair daughter, and no more,
The which he loved passing well.’

Pol. [*Aside*] Still on my daughter.

Ham. Am I not i' the right, old Jephthah?

Pol. If you call me Jephthah, my lord, I have a daughter that I love passing well. 431

Ham. Nay, that follows not.

Pol. What follows, then, my lord?

Ham. Why,

‘As by lot, God wot,’ 435

and then, you know,

‘It came to pass, as most like it was,’ —
the first row of the pious chanson will show you more;
for look, where my abridgements come.

Enter four or five Players.

You are welcome, masters; welcome, all. I am glad to see thee well. Welcome, good friends. O, my old friend! thy face is valanced since I saw thee last: comest thou to beard me in Denmark? What, my young lady and mistress! By’r lady, your ladyship is nearer to heaven than when I saw you last, by the altitude of a chopine. Pray God, your voice, like a piece of uncurrent gold, be not cracked within the ring. Masters, you are all welcome. We’ll e’en to’t like French falconers, fly at any thing we see: we’ll have a speech straight: come, give us a taste of your quality; come, a passionate speech. 452

First Play. What speech, my lord?

Ham. I heard thee speak me a speech once, but it was never acted; or, if it was, not above once; for the play, I remember, pleased not the million; ’t was caviare to the general: but it was — as I received it, and others, whose judgements in such matters cried in the top of mine — an excellent play, well digested in the scenes, set down with as much modesty as cunning. I remember, one said there

were no sallets in the lines to make the matter savory, nor no matter in the phrase that might indict the author of affectation; but called it an honest method, as wholesome as sweet, and by very much more handsome than fine. One speech in it I chiefly loved: 't was Æneas' tale to Dido; and thereabout of it especially, where he speaks of Priam's slaughter: if it live in your memory, begin at this line: let me see, let me see — 471

'The rugged Pyrrhus, like the Hyrcanian beast,' —
it is not so: — it begins with Pyrrhus: —

'The rugged Pyrrhus, he whose sable arms,
Black as his purpose, did the night resemble 475
When he lay couched in the ominous horse,
Hath now this dread and black complexion smeared
With heraldry more dismal; head to foot
Now is he total gules; horribly tricked
With blood of fathers, mothers, daughters, sons, 480
Baked and impasted with the parching streets,
That lend a tyrannous and damned light
To their lord's murder: roasted in wrath and fire,
And thus o'er-sized with coagulate gore,
With eyes like carbuncles, the hellish Pyrrhus 485
Old grandsire Priam seeks.'

So, proceed you.

Pol. 'Fore God, my lord, well spoken, with good accent and good discretion.

First Play. 'Anon he finds him 490

Striking too short at Greeks; his antique sword,
Rebellious to his arm, lies where it falls,
Repugnant to command: unequal matched,
Pyrrhus at Priam drives; in rage strikes wide;
But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword 495

The unnerved father falls. Then senseless Ilium,
Seeming to feel this blow, with flaming top
Stoops to his base, and with a hideous crash
Takes prisoner Pyrrhus' ear: for, lo! his sword,
Which was declining on the milky head 500
Of reverend Priam, seemed i' the air to stick:
So, as a painted tyrant, Pyrrhus stood,
And like a neutral to his will and matter,
Did nothing.

But, as we often see, against some storm, 505
A silence in the heavens, the rack stand still,
The bold wind speechless and the orb below
As hush as death, anon the dreadful thunder
Doth rend the region, so, after Pyrrhus' pause,
Aroused vengeance sets him new a-work; 510
And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall
On Mars's armor forged for proof eterne
With less remorse than Pyrrhus' bleeding sword
Now falls on Priam.

Out, out, thou strumpet, Fortune! All you gods, 515
In general synod, take away her power;
Break all the spokes and fellies from her wheel,
And bowl the round nave down the hill of heaven,
As low as to the fiends!'

Pol. This is too long. 520

Ham. It shall to the barber's, with your beard. Prithee,
say on: he 's for a jig or a tale of bawdry, or he sleeps:
say on: come to Hecuba.

First Play. 'But who, O, who had seen the mobled
queen —' 525

Ham. 'The mobled queen?'

Pol. That 's good; 'mobled queen' is good.

First Play. 'Run barefoot up and down, threatening
the flames

With bisson rheum; a clout upon that head
Where late the diadem stood, and for a robe, 530
About her lank and all o'er-teemed loins,
A blanket, in the alarm of fear caught up;
Who this had seen, with tongue in venom steeped,
'Gainst Fortune's state would treason have pronounced:

But if the gods themselves did see her then 535
When she saw Pyrrhus make malicious sport
In mincing with his sword her husband's limbs,
The instant burst of clamor that she made,
Unless things mortal move them not at all,
Would have made milch the burning eyes of
heaven, 540
And passion in the gods.'

Pol. Look, whether he has not turned his color and
has tears in 's eyes. Pray you, no more.

Ham. 'T is well; I'll have thee speak out the rest soon.
Good my lord, will you see the players well bestowed?
Do you hear, let them be well used; for they are the
abstract and brief chronicles of the time: after your
death you were better have a bad epitaph than their ill
report while you live. 551

Pol. My lord, I will use them according to their
desert.

Ham. God's bodykins, man, much better: use every
man after his desert, and who should 'scape whipping?
Use them after your own honor and dignity: the less
they deserve, the more merit is in your bounty. Take
them in. 558

Pol. Come, sirs.

Ham. Follow him, friends: we'll hear a play to-morrow. [*Exit Polonius with all the Players but the First.*] Dost thou hear me, old friend; can you play the Murder of Gonzago? 563

First Play. Ay, my lord.

Ham. We'll ha't to-morrow night. You could, for a need, study a speech of some dozen or sixteen lines, which I would set down and insert in 't, could you not? 568

First Play. Ay, my lord.

Ham. Very well. Follow that lord; and look you mock him not. [*Exit First Player.*] My good friends, I'll leave you till night: you are welcome to Elsinore. 573

Ros. Good my lord!

Ham. Ay, so, God be wi' ye; [*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*] Now I am alone. 577

O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!

Is it not monstrous that this player here,

But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,

Could force his soul so to his own conceit

That from her working all his visage wanned, 580

Tears in his eyes, distraction in 's aspect,

A broken voice, and his whole function suiting

With forms to his conceit? and all for nothing!

For Hecuba!

What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba, 585

That he should weep for her? What would he do,

Had he the motive and the cue for passion

That I have? He would drown the stage with tears

And cleave the general ear with horrid speech,

Make mad the guilty and appal the free, 590

Confound the ignorant, and amaze indeed

The very faculties of eyes and ears.

Yet I,
A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak,
Like John-a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause, 595
And can say nothing ; no, not for a king,
Upon whose property and most dear life
A damned defeat was made. Am I a coward ?
Who calls me villain ? breaks my pate across ?
Plucks off my beard, and blows it in my face ? 600
Tweaks me by the nose ? gives me the lie i' the throat,
As deep as to the lungs ? who does me this ?
Ha !
'Swounds, I should take it : for it cannot be
But I am pigeon-livered and lack gall 605
To make oppression bitter, or ere this
I should have fatted all the region kites
With this slave's offal : bloody, bawdy villain !
Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless villain !
O, vengeance ! 610
Why, what an ass am I ! This is most brave,
That I, the son of a dear father murdered,
Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,
Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with words,
And fall a-cursing, like a very drab, 615
A scullion !
Fie upon 't ! foh ! About, my brain ! I have heard
That guilty creatures sitting at a play
Have by the very cunning of the scene
Been struck so to the soul that presently 620
They have proclaimed their malefactions ;
For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak
With most miraculous organ. I'll have these players
Play something like the murder of my father

Before my uncle: I'll observe his looks; 625
I'll tent him to the quick: if he but blench,
I know my course. The spirit that I have seen
May be the devil: and the devil hath power
To assume a pleasing shape; yea, and perhaps
Out of my weakness and my melancholy, 630
As he is very potent with such spirits,
Abuses me to damn me: I'll have grounds
More relative than this: the play's the thing
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king.

[*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I. *A room in the castle.*

Enter KING, QUEEN, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ,
and GUILDENSTERN.

King. And can you, by no drift of circumstance,
Get from him why he puts on this confusion,
Grating so harshly all his days of quiet
With turbulent and dangerous lunacy?

Ros. He does confess he feels himself distracted; 5
But from what cause he will by no means speak.

Guil. Nor do we find him forward to be sounded,
But, with a crafty madness, keeps aloof,
When we would bring him on to some confession
Of his true state.

Queen. Did he receive you well? 10

Ros. Most like a gentleman.

Guil. But with much forcing of his disposition.

Ros. Niggard of question; but, of our demands,
Most free in his reply.

Queen. Did you assay him
To any pastime ? 15

Ros. Madam, it so fell out, that certain players
We o'er-raught on the way : of these we told him ;
And there did seem in him a kind of joy
To hear of it : they are about the court,
And, as I think, they have already order 20
This night to play before him.

Pol. 'T is most true :
And he beseeched me to entreat your majesties
To hear and see the matter.

King. With all my heart ; and it doth much content
me
To hear him so inclined. 25

Good gentlemen, give him a further edge,
And drive his purpose on to these delights.

Ros. We shall, my lord.

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*]

King. Sweet Gertrude, leave us too ;
For we have closely sent for Hamlet hither,
That he, as 't were by accident, may here 30
Affront Ophelia :

Her father and myself, lawful espials,
Will so bestow ourselves that, seeing, unseen,
We may of their encounter frankly judge,
And gather by him, as he is behaved, 35
If 't be the affliction of his love or no
That thus he suffers for.

Queen. I shall obey you.
And for your part, Ophelia, I do wish
That your good beauties be the happy cause
Of Hamlet's wildness : so shall I hope your virtues 40

Will bring him to his wonted way again,
To both your honors.

Oph. Madam, I wish it may. [Exit Queen.]

Pol. Ophelia, walk you here. Gracious, so please you,
We will bestow ourselves. [To Ophelia] Read on this
book;

That show of such an exercise may color 45
Your loneliness. We are oft to blame in this, —
'T is too much proved — that with devotion's visage
And pious action we do sugar o'er
The devil himself.

King. [Aside] O, 't is too true!
How smart a lash that speech doth give my conscience!
The harlot's cheek, beautied with plastering art, 51
Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it
Than is my deed to my most painted word:
O heavy burthen!

Pol. I hear him coming: let's withdraw, my lord. 55
[Exeunt King and Polonius.]

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. To be, or not to be: that is the question:
Whether 't is nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them. To die: to sleep; 60
No more; and by a sleep to say we end
The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to, 't is a consummation
Devoutly to be wished. To die, to sleep;
To sleep: perchance to dream: ay, there's the rub; 65
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come

When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
 Must give us pause: there's the respect
 That makes calamity of so long life;
 For who would bear the whips and scorns of time, 70
 The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
 The pangs of despised love, the law's delay,
 The insolence of office and the spurns
 That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
 When he himself might his quietus make 75
 With a bare bodkin? Who would fardels bear,
 To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
 But that the dread of something after death,
 The undiscovered country from whose bourn
 No traveller returns, puzzles the will 80
 And makes us rather bear those ills we have
 Than fly to others that we know not of?
 Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;
 And thus the native hue of resolution
 Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought, 85
 And enterprises of great pith and moment
 With this regard their currents turn awry,
 And lose the name of action. — Soft you now!
 The fair Ophelia! Nymph, in thy orisons
 Be all my sins remembered.

Oph. Good my lord, 90
 How does your honor for this many a day?

Ham. I humbly thank you; well, well, well.

Oph. My lord, I have remembrances of yours,
 That I have longed long to re-deliver;
 I pray you, now receive them. 95

Ham. No, not I;
 I never gave you aught.

Oph. My honored lord, you know right well you did;

And, with them, words of so sweet breath composed
As made the things more rich: their perfume lost,
Take these again; for to the noble mind 100
Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind.
There, my lord.

Ham. Ha, ha! are you honest?

Oph. My lord?

Ham. Are you fair? 105

Oph. What means your lordship?

Ham. That if you be honest and fair, your honesty
should admit no discourse to your beauty.

Oph. Could beauty, my lord, have better commerce
than with honesty? 110

Ham. Ay, truly; for the power of beauty will sooner
transform honesty from what it is to a bawd than the
force of honesty can translate beauty into his likeness:
this was sometime a paradox, but now the time gives it
proof. I did love you once. 116

Oph. Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.

Ham. You should not have believed me; for virtue
cannot so inoculate our old stock but we shall relish of it:
I loved you not. 120

Oph. I was the more deceived.

Ham. Get thee to a nunnery: why wouldst thou be
a breeder of sinners? I am myself indifferent honest;
but yet I could accuse me of such things that it were
better my mother had not borne me: I am very proud,
revengeful, ambitious, with more offences at my beck
than I have thoughts to put them in, imagination to
give them shape, or time to act them in. What should

such fellows as I do crawling between earth and heaven ?
We are arrant knaves, all ; believe none of us. Go thy
ways to a nunnery. Where 's your father ? 133

Oph. At home, my lord.

Ham. Let the doors be shut upon him, that he may
play the fool no where but in 's own house. Farewell.

Oph. O, help him, you sweet heavens ! 138

Ham. If thou dost marry, I'll give thee this plague
for thy dowry : be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow,
thou shalt not escape calumny. Get thee to a nunnery,
go : farewell. Or, if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool ;
for wise men know well enough what monsters you make
of them. To a nunnery, go, and quickly too. Farewell.

Oph. O heavenly powers, restore him ! 147

Ham. I have heard of your paintings too, well enough ;
God has given you one face, and you make yourselves an-
other : you jig, you amble, and you lisp, and nick-name
God's creatures, and make your wantonness your igno-
rance. Go to, I'll no more on 't ; it hath made me mad. I
say, we will have no more marriages : those that are mar-
ried already, all but one, shall live ; the rest shall keep as
they are. To a nunnery, go. [*Exit.* 156

Oph. O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown !
The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword ;
The expectancy and rose of the fair state, 160
The glass of fashion and the mould of form,
The observed of all the observers, quite, quite down !
And I, of ladies most deject and wretched,
That sucked the honey of his music vows,
Now see that noble and most sovereign reason, 165
Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh ;
That unmatched form and feature of blown youth

Blasted with ecstasy: O, woe is me,
To have seen what I have seen, see what I see!

Re-enter KING and POLONIUS.

King. Love! his affections do not that way tend; 170
Nor what he spake, though it lacked form a little,
Was not like madness. There's something in his soul,
O'er which his melancholy sits on brood;
And I do doubt the hatch and the disclose
Will be some danger: which for to prevent, 175
I have in quick determination

Thus set it down: he shall with speed to England,
For the demand of our neglected tribute:
Haply the seas and countries different
With variable objects shall expel 180
This something-settled matter in his heart,
Whereon his brains still beating puts him thus
From fashion of himself. What think you on't?

Pol. It shall do well: but yet do I believe 185
The origin and commencement of his grief
Sprung from neglected love. How now, Ophelia!
You need not tell us what Lord Hamlet said;
We heard it all. My lord, do as you please;
But, if you hold it fit, after the play
Let his queen mother all alone entreat him 190
To show his grief: let her be round with him;
And I'll be placed, so please you, in the ear
Of all their conference. If she find him not,
To England send him, or confine him where
Your wisdom best shall think. 195

King. It shall be so:
Madness in great ones must not unwatched go. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *A hall in the castle.**Enter HAMLET and Players.*

Ham. Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue: but if you mouth it, as many of your players do, I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus, but use all gently; for in the very torrent, tempest, and, as I may say, the whirlwind of passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to the soul to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings, who for the most part are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb-shows and noise: I would have such a fellow whipped for o'erdoing Termagant; it out-herods Herod: pray you, avoid it. 16

First Play. I warrant your honor.

Ham. Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor: suit the action to the word, the word to the action; with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature: for any thing so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first and now, was and is, to hold, as 't were, the mirror up to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure. Now this overdone, or come tardy off, though it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve; the censure of the which one must in your allowance o'erweigh a whole theatre of others. O, there be players that I have seen play, and

heard others praise, and that highly, not to speak it profanely, that, neither having the accent of Christians nor the gait of Christian, pagan, nor man, have so strutted and bellowed that I have thought some of nature's journeymen had made men and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably. 39

First Play. I hope we have reformed that indifferently with us, sir.

Ham. O, reform it altogether. And let those that play your clowns speak no more than is set down for them; for there be of them that will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too; though, in the mean time, some necessary question of the play be then to be considered: that's villanous, and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it. Go, make you ready. [*Exeunt Players.* 51

Enter POLONIUS, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.

How now, my lord! will the king hear this piece of work?

Pol. And the queen too, and that presently.

Ham. Bid the players make haste. [*Exit Polonius.*

Will you two help to hasten them? 55

Guil. }
Ros. } We will, my lord.

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*

Ham. What ho! Horatio!

Enter HORATIO.

Hor. Here, sweet lord, at your service.

Ham. Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man

As e'er my conversation coped withal. 60

Hor. O, my dear lord, —

Ham.

Nay, do not think I flatter;

For what advancement may I hope from thee
That no revenue hast but thy good spirits,
To feed and clothe thee? Why should the poor be
flattered?

No, let the candied tongue lick absurd pomp, 65

And crook the pregnant hinges of the knee

Where thrift may follow fawning. Dost thou hear?

Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice

And could of men distinguish, her election

Hath sealed thee for herself; for thou hast been 70

As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing,

A man that fortune's buffets and rewards

Hast ta'en with equal thanks: and blest are those

Whose blood and judgement are so well commingled,

That they are not a pipe for fortune's finger 75

To sound what stop she please. Give me that man

That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him

In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart,

As I do thee. — Something too much of this. —

There is a play to-night before the king; 80

One scene of it comes near the circumstance

Which I have told thee of my father's death:

I prithee, when thou seest that act afoot,

Even with the very comment of thy soul

Observe mine uncle: if his occulted guilt 85

Do not itself unkennel in one speech,

It is a damned ghost that we have seen,

And my imaginations are as foul

As Vulcan's stithy. Give him heedful note;

For I mine eyes will rivet to his face, 90

And after we will both our judgements join

In censure of his seeming.

Hor. Well, my lord :
If he steal aught the whilst this play is playing,
And 'scape detecting, I will pay the theft.

Ham. They are coming to the play ; I must be idle :
Get you a place. 96

Danish march. A flourish. Enter KING, QUEEN, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, and others.

King. How fares our cousin Hamlet ?

Ham. Excellent, i' faith ; of the chameleon's dish ; I eat the air, promise-crammed : you cannot feed capons so.

King. I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet ; these words are not mine. 102

Ham. No, nor mine now. [*To Polonius*] My lord, you played once i' the university, you say ?

Pol. That did I, my lord ; and was accounted a good actor. 106

Ham. What did you enact ?

Pol. I did enact Julius Cæsar : I was killed i' the Capitol ; Brutus killed me.

Ham. It was a brute part of him to kill so capital a calf there. Be the players ready ? 111

Ros. Ay, my lord ; they stay upon your patience.

Queen. Come hither, my dear Hamlet, sit by me. 114

Ham. No, good mother, here 's metal more attractive.

Pol. [*To the King*] O, ho ! do you mark that ?

Ham. Lady, shall I lie in your lap ?

[*Lying down at Ophelia's feet.*]

Oph. You are merry, my lord.

Ham. Who, I ? 130

Oph. Ay, my lord.

Ham. O God, your only jig-maker. What should a

man do but be merry ? for, look you, how cheerfully my mother looks, and my father died within these two hours.

Oph. Nay, 't is twice two months, my lord. 136

Ham. So long ? Nay then, let the devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of sables. O heavens ! die two months ago, and not forgotten yet ? Then there's hope a great man's memory may outlive his life half a year : but, by'r lady, he must build churches, then ; or else shall he suffer not thinking on, with the hobby-horse, whose epitaph is 'For, O, for, O, the hobby-horse is forgot.' 145

Hautboys play. The dumb-show enters.

Enter a King and a Queen very lovingly ; the Queen embracing him, and he her. She kneels, and makes show of protestation unto him. He takes her up, and declines his head upon her neck : lays him down upon a bank of flowers : she, seeing him asleep, leaves him. Anon comes in a fellow, takes off his crown, kisses it, and pours poison in the King's ears, and exit. The Queen returns ; finds the King dead, and makes passionate action. The Poisoner, with some two or three Mutes, comes in again, seeming to lament with her. The dead body is carried away. The Poisoner wooes the Queen with gifts : she seems loath and unwilling awhile, but in the end accepts his love.

[Exeunt.]

Oph. What means this, my lord ?

Ham. Marry, this is miching mallecho ; it means mischief.

Oph. Belike this show imports the argument of the play. 150

Enter Prologue.

Ham. We shall know by this fellow: the players cannot keep counsel; they'll tell all.

Oph. Will he tell us what this show meant?

Ham. Ay, or any show that you'll show him.

Oph. I'll mark the play.

Pro. For us, and for our tragedy,
Here stooping to your clemency, 160
We beg your hearing patiently. [*Exit.*

Ham. Is this a prologue, or the posy of a ring?

Oph. 'T is brief, my lord.

Ham. As woman's love.

Enter two Players, King and Queen.

P. King. Full thirty times hath Phœbus' cart gone
round 165

Neptune's salt wash and Tellus' orbed ground,
And thirty dozen moons with borrowed sheen
About the world have times twelve thirties been
Since love our hearts and Hymen did our hands
Unite commutual in most sacred bands. 170

P. Queen. So many journeys may the sun and moon
Make us again count o'er ere love be done!
But, woe is me, you are so sick of late,
So far from cheer and from your former state,
That I distrust you. Yet, though I distrust, 175
Discomfort you, my lord, it nothing must:
For women's fear and love holds quantity;
In neither aught, or in extremity.
Now, what my love is, proof hath made you know;
And as my love is sized, my fear is so: 180

Where love is great, the littlest doubts are fear;
Where little fears grow great, great love grows there.

P. King. 'Faith, I must leave thee, love, and shortly too;

My operant powers their functions leave to do:
And thou shalt live in this fair world behind, 185
Honored, beloved; and haply one as kind
For husband shalt thou —

P. Queen. O, confound the rest!
Such love must needs be treason in my breast:
In second husband let me be accurst!
None wed the second but who killed the first.

Ham. [*Aside*] Wormwood, wormwood.

P. Queen. The instances that second marriage move
Are base respects of thrift, but none of love:
A second time I kill my husband dead,
When second husband kisses me in bed. 195

P. King. I do believe you think what now you speak;
But what we do determine oft we break.
Purpose is but the slave to memory,
Of violent birth, but poor validity:
Which now, like fruit unripe, sticks on the tree; 200
But fall, unshaken, when they mellow be.
Most necessary 't is that we forget
To pay ourselves what to ourselves is debt:
What to ourselves in passion we propose,
The passion ending, doth the purpose lose. 205
The violence of either grief or joy
Their own enactures with themselves destroy:
Where joy most revels, grief doth most lament;
Grief joys, joy grieves, on slender accident.
This world is not for aye, nor 't is not strange 210

That even our loves should with our fortunes change ;
For 't is a question left us yet to prove,
Whether love lead fortune, or else fortune love.
The great man down, you mark his favorite flies ;
The poor advanced makes friends of enemies. 215
And hitherto doth love on fortune tend ;
For who not needs shall never lack a friend,
And who in want a hollow friend doth try,
Directly seasons him his enemy.
But, orderly to end where I begun, 220
Our wills and fates do so contrary run
That our devices still are overthrown ;
Our thoughts are ours, their ends none of our own :
So think thou wilt no second husband wed ;
But die thy thoughts when thy first lord is dead. 225

P. Queen. Nor earth to me give food, nor heaven
light !

Sport and repose lock from me day and night !
To desperation turn my trust and hope !
An anchor's cheer in prison be my scope !
Each opposite that blanks the face of joy 230
Meet what I would have well and it destroy !
Both here and hence pursue me lasting strife,
If, once a widow, ever I be wife !

Ham. If she should break it now !

P. King. 'T is deeply sworn. Sweet, leave me here
awhile ; 235

My spirits grow dull, and fain I would beguile
The tedious day with sleep. [*Sleeps.*

P. Queen. Sleep rock thy brain ;

And never come mischance between us twain ! [*Exit.*

Ham. Madam, how like you this play ?

Queen. The lady protests too much, methinks. 240

Ham. O, but she'll keep her word.

King. Have you heard the argument? Is there no offence in 't?

Ham. No, no, they do but jest, poison in jest; no offence i' the world. 245

King. What do you call the play?

Ham. The Mouse-trap. Marry, how? Tropically. This play is the image of a murder done in Vienna: Gonzago is the duke's name; his wife, Baptista: you shall see anon; 't is a knavish piece of work: but what o' that? Your majesty and we that have free souls, it touches us not: let the galled jade wince, our withers are unwrung.

Enter LUCIANUS.

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king.

Oph. You are as good as a chorus, my lord. 255

Ham. I could interpret between you and your love, if I could see the puppets dallying. — Begin, murderer; pox, leave thy damnable faces, and begin. Come: 'the croaking raven doth bellow for revenge.' 265

Luc. Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and time agreeing;

Confederate season, else no creature seeing;

Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected,

With Hecate's ban thrice blasted, thrice infected,

Thy natural magic and dire property, 270

On wholesome life usurp immediately.

[*Pours the poison into the sleeper's ears.*]

Ham. He poisons him i' the garden for 's estate.

His name's Gonzago: the story is extant, and writ in
choise Italian: you shall see anon how the murderer gets
the love of Gonzago's wife. 275

Oph. The king rises.

Ham. What, frightened with false fire!

Queen. How fares my lord?

Pol. Give o'er the play.

King. Give me some light: away! 280

All. Lights, lights, lights!

[*Exeunt all but Hamlet and Horatio.*]

Ham. Why, let the stricken deer go weep,

The hart ungalled play;

For some must watch, while some must sleep:

So runs the world away. 285

Would not this, sir, and a forest of feathers — if the rest
of my fortunes turn Turk with me — with two Provin-
cial roses on my razed shoes, get me a fellowship in a
cry of players, sir?

Hor. Half a share. 290

Ham. A whole one, I.

For thou dost know, O Damon dear,

This realm dismantled was

Of Jove himself; and now reigns here

A very, very — pajock. 295

Hor. You might have rimed.

Ham. O good Horatio, I'll take the ghost's word for
a thousand pound. Didst perceive?

Hor. Very well, my lord.

Ham. Upon the talk of the poisoning? 300

Hor. I did very well note him.

Ham. Ah, ha! Come, some music! come, the
recorders!

For if the king like not the comedy,
Why then, belike, he likes it not, perdy. 305
Come, some music!

Re-enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

Guil. Good my lord, vouchsafe me a word with you.

Ham. Sir, a whole history.

Guil. The king, sir, — 310

Ham. Ay, sir, what of him?

Guil. Is in his retirement marvellous distempered.

Ham. With drink, sir?

Guil. No, my lord, rather with choler. 315

Ham. Your wisdom should show itself more richer to signify this to his doctor; for, for me to put him to his purgation would perhaps plunge him into far more choler.

Guil. Good my lord, put your discourse into some frame and start not so wildly from my affair. 321

Ham. I am tame, sir: pronounce.

Guil. The queen, your mother, in most great affliction of spirit, hath sent me to you.

Ham. You are welcome. 325

Guil. Nay, good my lord, this courtesy is not of the right breed. If it shall please you to make me a wholesome answer, I will do your mother's commandment: if not, your pardon and my return shall be the end of my business. 330

Ham. Sir, I cannot.

Guil. What, my lord?

Ham. Make you a wholesome answer; my wit's diseased: but, sir, such answer as I can make, you shall command; or, rather, as you say, my mother: therefore no more, but to the matter: my mother, you say, — 337

Ros. Then thus she says; your behavior hath struck her into amazement and admiration.

Ham. O wonderful son, that can so astonish a mother! But is there no sequel at the heels of this mother's admiration? 342

Ros. She desires to speak with you in her closet, ere you go to bed.

Ham. We shall obey, were she ten times our mother. Have you any further trade with us? 346

Ros. My lord, you once did love me.

Ham. So I do still, by these pickers and stealers.

Ros. Good my lord, what is your cause of distemper? you do, surely, bar the door upon your own liberty, if you deny your griefs to your friend. 353

Ham. Sir, I lack advancement.

Ros. How can that be, when you have the voice of the king himself for your succession in Denmark? 357

Ham. Ay, but sir, 'While the grass grows,' — the proverb is something musty.

Re-enter Players with recorders.

O, the recorders! let me see one. To withdraw with you: — why do you go about to recover the wind of me, as if you would drive me into a toil? 362

Guil. O, my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.

Ham. I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this pipe? 366

Guil. My lord, I cannot.

Ham. I pray you.

Guil. Believe me, I cannot.

Ham. I do beseech you. 370

Guil. I know no touch of it, my lord.

Ham. 'Tis as easy as lying: govern these ventages with your finger and thumb, give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent music. Look you, these are the stops. 376

Guil. But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony; I have not the skill.

Ham. Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me! You would play upon me; you would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass: and there is much music, excellent voice, in this little organ; yet cannot you make it speak. 'Sblood, do you think I am easier to be played on than a pipe? Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me, yet you cannot play upon me.

Enter POLONIUS.

God bless you, sir! 390

Pol. My lord, the queen would speak with you, and presently.

Ham. Do you see yonder cloud that's almost in shape of a camel?

Pol. By the mass, and 't is like a camel, indeed. 395

Ham. Methinks it is like a weasel.

Pol. It is backed like a weasel.

Ham. Or like a whale?

Pol. Very like a whale.

Ham. Then I will come to my mother by and by. They fool me to the top of my bent. I will come by and by. 402

Pol. I will say so.

Ham. By and by is easily said. [*Exit Polonius.*
Leave me, friends. [*Exeunt all but Hamlet.* 405
'Tis now the very witching time of night,
When churchyards yawn and hell itself breathes out
Contagion to this world: now could I drink hot blood,
And do such bitter business as the day
Would quake to look on. Soft! now to my mother. 410
O heart, lose not thy nature; let not ever
The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom:
Let me be cruel, not unnatural:
I will speak daggers to her, but use none;
My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites; 415
How in my words soever she be shent,
To give them seals never, my soul, consent! [*Exit.*

SCENE III. *A room in the castle.*

Enter KING, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.

King. I like him not, nor stands it safe with us
To let his madness range. Therefore prepare you;
I your commission will forthwith dispatch,
And he to England shall along with you:
The terms of our estate may not endure 5
Hazard so dangerous as doth hourly grow
Out of his lunacies.

Guil. We will ourselves provide:
Most holy and religious fear it is
To keep those many many bodies safe
That live and feed upon your majesty. 10

Ros. The single and peculiar life is bound,
With all the strength and armor of the mind,
To keep itself from noyance; but much more

That spirit upon whose weal depend and rest
 The lives of many. The cease of majesty 15
 Dies not alone ; but, like a gulf, doth draw
 What's near it with it : it is a massy wheel,
 Fixed on the summit of the highest mount,
 To whose huge spokes ten thousand lesser things
 Are mortised and adjoined ; which, when it falls, 20
 Each small annexment, petty consequence,
 Attends the boisterous ruin. Never alone
 Did the king sigh, but with a general groan.

King. Arm you, I pray you, to this speedy voyage ;
 For we will fetters put upon this fear, 25
 Which now goes too free-footed.

Ros. }
Guil. }

We will haste us.

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*]

Enter POLONIUS.

Pol. My lord, he's going to his mother's closet :
 Behind the arras I'll convey myself,
 To hear the process ; I'll warrant she'll tax him home :
 And, as you said, and wisely was it said, 30
 'Tis meet that some more audience than a mother,
 Since nature makes them partial, should o'erhear
 The speech, of vantage. Fare you well, my liege :
 I'll call upon you ere you go to bed,
 And tell you what I know. 35

King.

Thanks, dear my lord.

[*Exit Polonius.*]

O, my offence is rank, it smells to heaven ;
 It hath the primal eldest curse upon 't,
 A brother's murder. Pray can I not,

Though inclination be as sharp as will :
My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent ; 40
And, like a man to double business bound,
I stand in pause where I shall first begin,
And both neglect. What if this cursed hand
Were thicker than itself with brother's blood,
Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens 45
To wash it white as snow ? Whereto serves mercy
But to confront the visage of offence ?
And what's in prayer but this two-fold force,
To be forestalled ere we come to fall,
Or pardoned being down ? Then I'll look up ; 50
My fault is past. But, O, what form of prayer
Can serve my turn ? 'Forgive me my foul murder' ?
That cannot be ; since I am still possessed
Of those effects for which I did the murder,
My crown, mine own ambition and my queen. 55
May one be pardoned and retain the offence ?
In the corrupted currents of this world
Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice,
And oft 't is seen the wicked prize itself
Buys out the law : but 't is not so above ; 60
There is no shuffling, there the action lies
In his true nature ; and we ourselves compelled,
Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults,
To give in evidence. What then ? what rests ?
Try what repentance can : what can it not ? 65
Yet what can it when one cannot repent ?
O wretched state ! O bosom black as death !
O limed soul, that, struggling to be free,
Art more engaged ! Help, angels ! Make assay !
Bow, stubborn knees ; and, heart with strings of steel, 70

Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe !

All may be well.

[*Retires and kneels.*]

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. Now might I do it pat, now he is praying ;
And now I'll do 't. And so he goes to heaven ;
And so am I revenged. That would be scanned : 75
A villain kills my father ; and for that,
I, his sole son, do this same villain send
To heaven.

O, this is hire and salary, not revenge.
He took my father grossly, full of bread ; 80
With all his crimes broad blown, as flush as May ;
And how his audit stands who knows save heaven ?
But in our circumstance and course of thought,
'T is heavy with him : and am I then revenged,
To take him in the purging of his soul, 85
When he is fit and seasoned for his passage ?
No !

Up, sword ; and know thou a more horrid hent :
When he is drunk asleep, or in his rage,
Or in the incestuous pleasure of his bed ; 90
At gaming, swearing, or about some act
That has no relish of salvation in 't ;
Then trip him, that his heels may kick at heaven,
And that his soul may be as damned and black
As hell, whereto it goes. My mother stays : 95
This physic but prolongs thy sickly days. [*Exit.*]

King. [*Rising*] My words fly up, my thoughts remain
below :

Words without thoughts never to heaven go. [*Exit.*]

SCENE IV. *The Queen's closet.**Enter QUEEN and POLONIUS.*

Pol. He will come straight. Look you lay home to him :

Tell him his pranks have been too broad to bear with,
And that your grace hath screened and stood between
Much heat and him. I'll sconce me even here.

Pray you, be round with him. 5

Ham. [*Within*] Mother, mother, mother !

Queen. I'll warrant you,
Fear me not: withdraw, I hear him coming.

[*Polonius hides behind the arras.*]

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. Now, mother, what's the matter ?

Queen. Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.

Ham. Mother, you have my father much offended. 10

Queen. Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.

Ham. Go, go, you question with a wicked tongue.

Queen. Why, how now, Hamlet !

Ham. What's the matter now ?

Queen. Have you forgot me ?

Ham. No, by the rood, not so :
You are the queen, your husband's brother's wife ; 15
And — would it were not so ! — you are my mother.

Queen. Nay, then, I'll set those to you that can speak.

Ham. Come, come, and sit you down ; you shall not
budge ;

You go not till I set you up a glass
Where you may see the inmost part of you. 20

Queen. What wilt thou do? thou wilt not murder me?
Help, help, ho!

Pol. [*Behind*] What, ho! help, help, help!

Ham. [*Drawing*] How now! a rat? Dead, for a
ducat, dead!

[*Makes a pass through the arras.*]

Pol. [*Behind*] O, I am slain! [*Falls and dies.*]

Queen. O me, what hast thou done? 25

Ham. Nay, I know not:

Is it the king?

Queen. O, what a rash and bloody deed is this!

Ham. A bloody deed! almost as bad, good mother,
As kill a king, and marry with his brother.

Queen. As kill a king! 30

Ham. Ay, lady, 't was my word.

[*Lifts up the arras and discovers Polonius.*]

Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!

I took thee for thy better: take thy fortune;

Thou find'st to be too busy is some danger.

Leave wringing of your hands: peace! sit you down,

And let me wring your heart; for so I shall, 35

If it be made of penetrable stuff,

If damned custom have not brassed it so

That it is proof and bulwark against sense.

Queen. What have I done, that thou dar'st wag thy
tongue

In noise so rude against me? 40

Ham. Such an act

That blurs the grace and blush of modesty,

Calls virtue hypocrite, takes off the rose

From the fair forehead of an innocent love

And sets a blister there; makes marriage-vows

As false as dicers' oaths : O, such a deed 45
As from the body of contraction plucks
The very soul, and sweet religion makes
A rhapsody of words : heaven's face doth glow ;
Yea, this solidity and compound mass,
With tristful visage, as against the doom, 50
Is thought-sick at the act.

Queen. Ay me, what act,
That roars so loud, and thunders in the index ?

Ham. Look here, upon this picture, and on this,
The counterfeited presentment of two brothers.
See, what a grace was seated on this brow ; 55
Hyperion's curls ; the front of Jove himself ;
An eye like Mars, to threaten and command ;
A station like the herald Mercury
New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill ;
A combination and a form indeed, 60
Where every god did seem to set his seal,
To give the world assurance of a man :
This was your husband. Look you now, what follows :
Here is your husband ; like a mildewed ear,
Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you eyes ? 65
Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,
And batten on this moor ? Ha ! have you eyes ?
You cannot call it love ; for at your age
The hey-day in the blood is tame, it's humble,
And waits upon the judgement : and what judgement 70
Would step from this to this ? Sense, sure, you have,
Else could you not have motion ; but sure, that sense
Is apoplexed ; for madness would not err,
Nor sense to ecstasy was ne'er so thrall'd
But it reserved some quantity of choice, 75

To serve in such a difference. What devil was 't
 That thus hath cozened you at hoodman-blind?
 Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight,
 Ears without hands or eyes, smelling sans all,
 Or but a sickly part of one true sense 80
 Could not so mope.

O shame! where is thy blush? Rebellious hell,
 If thou canst mutine in a matron's bones,
 To flaming youth let virtue be as wax,
 And melt in her own fire: proclaim no shame 85
 When the compulsive ardor gives the charge,
 Since frost itself as actively doth burn
 And reason panders will.

Queen. O Hamlet, speak no more:
 Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul;
 And there I see such black and grained spots 90
 As will not leave their tinct.

Ham. Nay, but to live
 Stewed in corruption, —

Queen. O, speak to me no more;
 These words, like daggers, enter in mine ears;
 No more, sweet Hamlet! 95

Ham. A murderer and a villain;
 A slave that is not twentieth part the tithe
 Of your precedent lord; a vice of kings;
 A cutpurse of the empire and the rule,
 That from a shelf the precious diadem stole, 100
 And put it in his pocket!

Queen. No more!

Ham. A king of shreds and patches, —

Enter Ghost.

Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings,
You heavenly guards! What would your gracious figure?

Queen. Alas, he's mad! 105

Ham. Do you not come your tardy son to chide,
That, lapsed in time and passion, lets go by
The important acting of your dread command? O, say!

Ghost. Do not forget: this visitation 110
Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.
But, look, amazement on thy mother sits:
O, step between her and her fighting soul:
Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works:
Speak to her, Hamlet. 115

Ham. How is it with you, lady?

Queen. Alas, how is 't with you,
That you do bend your eye on vacancy
And with the incorporal air do hold discourse?
Forth at your eyes your spirits wildly peep;
And, as the sleeping soldiers in the alarm, 120
Your bedded hair, like life in excrements,
Starts up, and stands an end. O gentle son,
Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper
Sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you look?

Ham. On him, on him! Look you, how pale he
glares! 125
His form and cause conjoined, preaching to stones,
Would make them capable. Do not look upon me;
Lest with this piteous action you convert
My stern effects: then what I have to do
Will want true color; tears perchance for blood. 130

Queen. To whom do you speak this?

Ham. Do you see nothing there ?

Queen. Nothing at all ; yet all that is I see.

Ham. Nor did you nothing hear ?

Queen. No, nothing but ourselves.

Ham. Why, look you there ! look, how it steals away !
My father, in his habit as he lived ! 135

Look, where he goes, even now, out at the portal !

[*Exit Ghost.*]

Queen. This is the very coinage of your brain :
This bodiless creation ecstasy
Is very cunning in.

Ham. Ecstasy !

My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time, 140

And makes as healthful music : it is not madness

That I have uttered : bring me to the test,

And I the matter will re-word ; which madness

Would gambol from. Mother, for love of grace,

Lay not that flattering unction to your soul, 145

That not your trespass, but my madness speaks :

It will but skin and film the ulcerous place,

Whilst rank corruption, mining all within,

Infects unseen. Confess yourself to heaven ;

Repent what's past ; avoid what is to come ; 150

And do not spread the compost on the weeds,

To make them ranker. Forgive me this my virtue ;

For in the fatness of these pursy times

Virtue itself of vice must pardon beg,

Yea, curb and woo for leave to do him good. 155

Queen. O Hamlet, thou hast cleft my heart in twain.

Ham. O, throw away the worser part of it,
And live the purer with the other half.

Good night : but go not to mine uncle's bed ;

Assume a virtue, if you have it not. 160
That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat,
Of habits devil, is angel yet in this,
That to the use of actions fair and good
He likewise gives a frock or livery,
That aptly is put on. — 165

Once more, good night:

And when you are desirous to be blessed,
I'll blessing beg of you. For this same lord,

[*Pointing to Polonius.*]

I do repent: but heaven hath pleased it so,
To punish me with this and this with me,
That I must be their scourge and minister. 175
I will bestow him, and will answer well
The death I gave him. So, again, good night.
I must be cruel, only to be kind:
Thus bad begins and worse remains behind.
One word more, good lady. 180

Queen.

What shall I do?

Ham. Not this, by no means, that I bid you do:
Let the bloat king, for a pair of reechy kisses,
Make you to ravel all this matter out,
That I essentially am not in madness,
But mad in craft. 'T were good you let him know;
For who, that's but a queen, fair, sober, wise,
Would from a paddock, from a bat, a gib, 190
Such dear concernings hide? who would do so?
No, in despite of sense and secrecy,
Unpeg the basket on the house's top,
Let the birds fly, and, like the famous ape,
To try conclusions, in the basket creep, 195
And break your own neck down.

Queen. Be thou assured, if words be made of breath,
And breath of life, I have no life to breathe
What thou hast said to me.

Ham. I must to England; you know that? 200

Queen. Alack,
I had forgot: 't is so concluded on.

Ham. There 's letters sealed: and my two school-
fellows,

Whom I will trust as I will adders fanged,
They bear the mandate; they must sweep my way,
And marshal me to knavery. Let it work; 205

For 't is the sport to have the engineer
Hoist with his own petar: and 't shall go hard
But I will delve one yard below their mines,
And blow them at the moon: O, 't is most sweet,
When in one line two crafts directly meet. 210

This man shall set me packing:
I 'll lug the guts into the neighbor room.
Mother, good night. Indeed this counsellor
Is now most still, most secret and most grave,
Who was in life a foolish prating knave. 215
Come, sir, to draw toward an end with you.
Good night, mother.

[Exeunt severally; Hamlet dragging in Polonius.]

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *A room in the castle.*

Enter KING, QUEEN, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.

King. There 's matter in these sighs; these profound
heaves

You must translate: 't is fit we understand them.

Where is your son?

Queen. Bestow this place on us a little while.

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*]

Ah, my good lord, what have I seen to-night! 5

King. What, Gertrude? How does Hamlet?

Queen. Mad as the sea and wind, when both contend

Which is the mightier: in his lawless fit,
Behind the arras hearing something stir,
Whips out his rapier, cries, 'A rat, a rat!' 10
And, in this brainish apprehension, kills
The unseen good old man.

King. O heavy deed!

It had been so with us, had we been there:
His liberty is full of threats to all;
To you yourself, to us, to every one. 15
Alas, how shall this bloody deed be answered?
It will be laid to us, whose providence
Should have kept short, restrained and out of haunt,
This mad young man: but so much was our love,
We would not understand what was most fit; 20
But, like the owner of a foul disease,
To keep it from divulging, let it feed
Even on the pith of life. Where is he gone?

Queen. To draw apart the body he hath killed:
O'er whom his very madness, like some ore 25
Among a mineral of metals base,
Shows itself pure; he weeps for what is done.

King. O Gertrude, come away!
The sun no sooner shall the mountains touch,
But we will ship him hence: and this vile deed 30

We must, with all our majesty and skill,
Both countenance and excuse. Ho, Guildenstern!

Re-enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

Friends both, go join you with some further aid:
Hamlet in madness hath Polonius slain,
And from his mother's closet hath he dragged him: 35
Go seek him out; speak fair, and bring the body
Into the chapel. I pray you, haste in this.

[Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.]

Come, Gertrude, we'll call up our wisest friends;
And let them know, both what we mean to do,
And what's untimely done. So, haply, slander, — 40
Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter,
As level as the cannon to his blank,
Transports his poisoned shot, may miss our name,
And hit the woundless air. O, come away!
My soul is full of discord and dismay. 45

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II. *Another room in the castle.*

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. Safely stowed.

Ros. }
Guil. } *[Within]* Hamlet! Lord Hamlet!

Ham. What noise? who calls on Hamlet? O, here they come.

Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

Ros. What have you done, my lord, with the dead body? 6

Ham. Compounded it with dust, whereto 't is kin.

Ros. Tell us where 't is, that we may take it thence
And bear it to the chapel.

Ham. Do not believe it.

Ros. Believe what ? 10

Ham. That I can keep your counsel and not mine
own. Besides, to be demanded of a sponge, what repli-
cation should be made by the son of a king ?

Ros. Take you me for a sponge, my lord ? 15

Ham. Ay, sir, that soaks up the king's countenance,
his rewards, his authorities. But such officers do the
king best service in the end: he keeps them, like an ape
doth nuts, in the corner of his jaw ; first mouthed, to be
last swallowed: when he needs what you have gleaned,
it is but squeezing you, and, sponge, you shall be dry
again. 23

Ros. I understand you not, my lord.

Ham. I am glad of it: a knavish speech sleeps in a
foolish ear. 26

Ros. My lord, you must tell us where the body is,
and go with us to the king.

Ham. The body is with the king, but the king is not
with the body. The king is a thing — 30

Guil. A thing, my lord !

Ham. Of nothing: bring me to him. Hide fox, and
all after. [Exeunt. 31

SCENE III. *Another room in the castle.*

Enter KING, attended.

King. I have sent to seek him, and to find the body.
How dangerous is it that this man goes loose !

Yet must not we put the strong law on him :
 He's loved of the distracted multitude,
 Who like not in their judgement, but their eyes : 5
 And where 't is so, the offender's scourge is weighed,
 But never the offence. To bear all smooth and even,
 This sudden sending him away must seem
 Deliberate pause : diseases desperate grown
 By desperate appliance are relieved, 10
 Or not at all.

Enter ROSENCRANTZ.

How now ! what hath befallen ?

Ros. Where the dead body is bestowed, my lord,
 We cannot get from him.

King. But where is he ?

Ros. Without, my lord ; guarded, to know your
 pleasure.

King. Bring him before us. 15

Ros. Ho, Guildenstern ! bring in my lord.

Enter HAMLET and GUILDENSTERN.

King. Now, Hamlet, where's Polonius ?

Ham. At supper.

King. At supper ! where ? 19

Ham. Not where he eats, but where he is eaten : a
 certain convocation of politic worms are e'en at him.
 Your worm is your only emperor for diet : we fat all
 creatures else to fat us, and we fat ourselves for maggots :
 your fat king and your lean beggar is but variable ser-
 vice, two dishes, but to one table : that's the end. 26

King. Alas, alas !

Ham. A man may fish with the worm that hath eat
 of a king, and eat of the fish that hath fed of that worm.

King. What dost thou mean by this? 31

Ham. Nothing but to show you how a king may go a progress through the guts of a beggar.

King. Where is Polonius? 34

Ham. In heaven; send thither to see: if your messenger find him not there, seek him i' the other place yourself. But indeed, if you find him not within this month, you shall nose him as you go up the stairs into the lobby.

King. Go seek him there. 40

[*To some Attendants.*

Ham. He will stay till ye come.

[*Exeunt Attendants.*

King. Hamlet, this deed, for thine especial safety,—
Which we do tender, as we dearly grieve
For that which thou hast done,—must send thee hence
With fiery quickness: therefore prepare thyself; 45
The bark is ready, and the wind at help,
The associates tend, and everything is bent
For England.

Ham. For England!

King. Ay, Hamlet.

Ham. Good.

King. So is it, if thou knew'st our purposes.

Ham. I see a cherub that sees them. But, come; for England! Farewell, dear mother. 51

King. Thy loving father, Hamlet.

Ham. My mother: father and mother is man and wife;
man and wife is one flesh; and so, my mother. Come,
for England! [*Exit.*

King. Follow him at foot; tempt him with speed
aboard; 56

Delay it not ; I 'll have him hence to-night
 Away ! for every thing is sealed and done
 That else leans on the affair : pray you, make haste.

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*

And, England, if my love thou hold'st at aught — 60
 As my great power thereof may give thee sense,
 Since yet thy cicatrice looks raw and red
 After the Danish sword, and thy free awe
 Pays homage to us — thou mayst not coldly set
 Our sovereign process ; which imports at full, 65
 By letters conjuring to that effect,
 The present death of Hamlet. Do it, England ;
 For like the hectic in my blood he rages,
 And thou must cure me : till I know 't is done,
 Howe'er my haps, my joys were ne'er begun. 70

[*Exit.*

SCENE IV. *A plain in Denmark.*

Enter FORTINBRAS, a Captain, and Soldiers, marching.

For. Go, captain, from me greet the Danish king ;
 Tell him that, by his license, Fortinbras
 Craves the conveyance of a promised march
 Over his kingdom. You know the rendezvous.
 If that his majesty would aught with us,
 We shall express our duty in his eye ;
 And let him know so.

Cap. I will do 't, my lord.

For. Go softly on. [*Exeunt Fortinbras and Soldiers.*

Enter HAMLET, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, and others.

Ham. Good sir, whose powers are these ?

Cap. They are of Norway, sir. 10

Ham. How purposed, sir, I pray you ?

Cap. Against some part of Poland.

Ham. Who commands them, sir?

Cap. The nephew to old Norway, Fortinbras.

Ham. Goes it against the main of Poland, sir, 15
Or for some frontier?

Cap. Truly to speak, and with no addition,
We go to gain a little patch of ground
That hath in it no profit but the name.
To pay five ducats, five, I would not farm it; 20
Nor will it yield to Norway or the Pole
A ranker rate, should it be sold in fee.

Ham. Why, then the Polack never will defend it.

Cap. Yes, it is already garrisoned.

Ham. Two thousand souls and twenty thousand ducats
Will not debate the question of this straw : 26
This is the imposthume of much wealth and peace,
That inward breaks, and shows no cause without
Why the man dies. I humbly thank you, sir.

Cap. God be wi' you, sir. [Exit.

Ros. Will't please you go, my lord? 31

Ham. I'll be with you straight. Go a little before.

[Exeunt all except Hamlet.

How all occasions do inform against me,
And spur my dull revenge! What is a man,
If his chief good and market of his time
Be but to sleep and feed? a beast, no more. 35
Sure, he that made us with such large discourse,
Looking before and after, gave us not
That capability and god-like reason
To fust in us unused. Now, whether it be
Bestial oblivion, or some craven scruple 40
Of thinking too precisely on the event,

A thought which, quartered, hath but one part wisdom
 And ever three parts coward, I do not know
 Why yet I live to say 'This thing's to do ;'
 Sith I have cause and will and strength and means 45
 To do 't. Examples gross as earth exhort me :
 Witness this army of such mass and charge
 Led by a delicate and tender prince,
 Whose spirit with divine ambition puffed
 Makes mouths at the invisible event, 50
 Exposing what is mortal and unsure
 To all that fortune, death and danger dare,
 Even for an egg-shell. Rightly to be great
 Is not to stir without great argument,
 But greatly to find quarrel in a straw 55
 When honor's at the stake. How stand I then,
 That have a father killed, a mother stained,
 Excitements of my reason and my blood,
 And let all sleep, while, to my shame, I see
 The imminent death of twenty thousand men, 60
 That, for a fantasy and trick of fame,
 Go to their graves like beds, fight for a plot
 Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause,
 Which is not tomb enough and continent
 To hide the slain ? O, from this time forth, 65
 My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth !

[*Exit.*

SCENE V. *Elsinore. A room in the castle.*

Enter QUEEN, HORATIO, and a Gentleman.

Queen. I will not speak with her.

Gent. She is importunate, indeed distract :
 Her mood will needs be pitied.

Queen. What would she have ?

Gent. She speaks much of her father ; says she hears
There's tricks i' the world ; and hems, and beats her
heart ; 5

Spurns enviously at straws ; speaks things in doubt,
That carry but half sense : her speech is nothing,
Yet the unshaped use of it doth move
The hearers to collection ; they aim at it,
And botch the words up fit to their own thoughts ; 10
Which, as her winks, and nods, and gestures yield them,
Indeed would make one think there might be thought,
Though nothing sure, yet much unhappily.

Hor. 'T were good she were spoken with ; for she may
strew

Dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds. 15

Queen. Let her come in. [*Exit Horatio.*]

To my sick soul, as sin's true nature is,
Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss :
So full of artless jealousy is guilt,
It spills itself in fearing to be spilt. 20

Re-enter HORATIO, with OPHELIA.

Oph. Where is the beauteous majesty of Denmark ?

Queen. How now, Ophelia !

Oph. [*Sings*] How should I your true love know
From another one ?

By his cockle hat and staff, 25
And his sandal shoon.

Queen. Alas, sweet lady, what imports this song ?

Oph. Say you ? nay, pray you, mark.

[*Sings*] He is dead and gone, lady,
He is dead and gone ; 30

At his head a grass-green turf,

At his heels a stone.

Queen. Nay, but, Ophelia, —

Oph. Pray you, mark.

[*Sings*] White his shroud as the mountain snow, — 35

Enter KING.

Queen. Alas, look here, my lord.

Oph. [*Sings*] Larded with sweet flowers ;

Which bewept to the grave did go

With true-love showers.

King. How do you, pretty lady ? 40

Oph. Well, God 'ild you! They say the owl was a baker's daughter. Lord, we know what we are, but know not what we may be. God be at your table!

King. Conceit upon her father. 45

Oph. Pray you, let's have no words of this ; but when they ask you what it means, say you this :

[*Sings*] To-morrow is Saint Valentine's day,

All in the morning betime,

And I a maid at your window, 50

To be your Valentine.

King. How long hath she been thus ? 67

Oph. I hope all will be well. We must be patient : but I cannot choose but weep, to think they should lay him i' the cold ground. My brother shall know of it : and so I thank you for your good counsel. Come, my coach ! Good night, ladies ; good night, sweet ladies ; good night, good night. [*Exit.* 74

King. Follow her close ; give her good watch, I pray you. [*Exit Horatio.*

O, this is the poison of deep grief ; it springs

All from her father's death. O Gertrude, Gertrude,
 When sorrows come, they come not single spies,
 But in battalions. First, her father slain :
 Next, your son gone ; and he most violent author 80
 Of his own just remove : the people muddled,
 Thick and unwholesome in their thoughts and whispers,
 For good Polonius' death ; and we have done but greenly,
 In hugger-mugger to inter him : poor Ophelia
 Divided from herself and her fair judgement, 85
 Without the which we are pictures, or mere beasts :
 Last, and as much containing as all these,
 Her brother is in secret come from France ;
 Feeds on his wonder, keeps himself in clouds,
 And wants not buzzers to infect his ear 90
 With pestilent speeches of his father's death ;
 Wherein necessity, of matter beggared,
 Will nothing stick our person to arraign
 In ear and ear. O my dear Gertrude, this,
 Like to a murdering-piece, in many places 95
 Gives me superfluous death. [*A noise within.*

Queen.

Alack, what noise is this ?

King. Where are my Switzers ? Let them guard the door.

Enter another Gentleman.

What is the matter ?

Gent.

Save yourself, my lord :

The ocean, overpeering of his list,
 Eats not the flats with more impetuous haste 100
 Than young Laertes, in a riotous head,
 O'erbears your officers. The rabble call him lord ;
 And, as the world were now but to begin,

Antiquity forgot, custom not known,
The ratifiers and props of every word, 105
They cry 'Choose we: Laertes shall be king:'
Caps, hands, and tongues, applaud it to the clouds:
'Laertes shall be king, Laertes king!'

Queen. How cheerfully on the false trail they cry!
O, this is counter, you false Danish dogs! 110

King. The doors are broke. [*Noise within.*]

Enter LAERTES, armed; Danes following.

Laer. Where is this king? Sirs, stand you all without.

Danes. No, let 's come in.

Laer. I pray you, give me leave.

Danes. We will, we will. [*They retire without the door.*]

Laer. I thank you: keep the door. O thou vile king,
Give me my father! 116

Queen. Calmly, good Laertes.

Laer. That drop of blood that 's calm proclaims me
bastard,

Cries cuckold to my father, brands the harlot
Even here, between the chaste unsmirched brow
Of my true mother. 120

King. What is the cause, Laertes,
That thy rebellion looks so giant-like?
Let him go, Gertrude; do not fear our person:
There 's such divinity doth hedge a king,
That treason can but peep to what it would,
Acts little of his will. Tell me, Laertes, 125
Why thou art thus incensed. Let him go, Gertrude.
Speak, man.

Laer. Where is my father?

King. Dead.

Queen. But not by him.

King. Let him demand his fill.

Laer. How came he dead? I'll not be juggled with:
To hell, allegiance! vows, to the blackest devil! 131
Conscience and grace, to the profoundest pit!
I dare damnation. To this point I stand,
That both the worlds I give to negligence,
Let come what comes; only I'll be revenged 135
Most thoroughly for my father.

King. Who shall stay you?

Laer. My will, not all the world:
And for my means, I'll husband them so well,
They shall go far with little.

King. Good Laertes,
If you desire to know the certainty 140
Of your dear father's death, is't writ in your revenge,
That, swoopstake, you will draw both friend and foe,
Winner and loser?

Laer. None but his enemies.

King. Will you know them then?

Laer. To his good friends thus wide I'll ope my arms;
And like the kind life-rendering pelican, 146
Repast them with my blood.

King. Why, now you speak
Like a good child and a true gentleman.
That I am guiltless of your father's death,
And am most sensibly in grief for it, 150
It shall as level to your judgement pierce
As day does to your eye.

Danes. [Within] Let her come in.

Laer. How now! what noise is that?

Re-enter OPHELIA.

O heat, dry up my brains! tears seven times salt,
 Burn out the sense and virtue of mine eye! 155
 By heaven, thy madness shall be paid by weight,
 Till our scale turn the beam. O rose of May!
 Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia!
 O heavens! is 't possible, a young maid's wits
 Should be as mortal as an old man's life? 160
 Nature is fine in love, and where 't is fine,
 It sends some precious instance of itself
 After the thing it loves.

Oph. [*Sings*]

They bore him barefaced on the bier;
 Hey non nonny, nonny, hey nonny; 165
 And in his grave rained many a tear:—

Fare you well, my dove!

Laer. Hadst thou thy wits, and didst persuade revenge,
 It could not move thus.

Oph. [*Sings*] You must sing a-down a-down, 170
 An you call him a-down-a.

O, how the wheel becomes it! It is the false steward,
 that stole his master's daughter.

Laer. This nothing's more than matter.

Oph. There's rosemary, that's for remembrance; pray,
 love, remember: and there is pansies, that's for thoughts.

Laer. A document in madness, thoughts and remem-
 brance fitted. 179

Oph. There's fennel for you, and columbines: there's
 rue for you; and here's some for me: we may call it
 herb of grace o' Sundays: O, you must wear your rue
 with a difference. There's a daisy: I would give you

some violets, but they withered all when my father died :
they say he made a good end, — 186

[*Sings.*] For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy.

Laer. Thought and affliction, passion, hell itself,
She turns to favor and to prettiness.

Oph. [*Sings*] And will he not come again ? 190

And will he not come again ?

No, no, he is dead :

Go to thy death-bed :

He never will come again.

His beard was as white as snow, 195

All flaxen was his poll :

He is gone, he is gone,

And we cast away moan :

God ha' mercy on his soul !

And of all Christian souls, I pray God. God be wi' ye.

[*Exit.* 200

Laer. Do you see this, O God ?

King. Laertes, I must commune with your grief,
Or you deny me right. Go but apart,
Make choice of whom your wisest friends you will,
And they shall hear and judge 'twixt you and me : 205
If by direct or by collateral hand

They find us touched, we will our kingdom give,

Our crown, our life, and all that we call ours,

To you in satisfaction ; but if not,

Be you content to lend your patience to us, 210

And we shall jointly labor with your soul

To give it due content.

Laer. Let this be so ;

His means of death, his obscure funeral —

No trophy, sword, nor hatchment o'er his bones,
No noble rite nor formal ostentation — 215
Cry to be heard, as 't were from heaven to earth,
That I must call 't in question.

King. So you shall;
And where the offence is let the great axe fall.
I pray you, go with me. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI. *Another room in the castle.*

Enter HORATIO and a Servant.

Hor. What are they that would speak with me?

Serv. Sailors, sir: they say they have letters for you.

Hor. Let them come in. [*Exit Servant.*]

I do not know from what part of the world

I should be greeted, if not from Lord Hamlet. 5

Enter Sailors.

First Sail. God bless you, sir.

Hor. Let him bless thee too.

First Sail. He shall, sir, an't please him. There's
a letter for you, sir: it comes from the ambassador that
was bound for England; if your name be Horatio, as I
am let to know it is. 11

Hor. [*Reads*] 'Horatio, when thou shalt have over-
looked this, give these fellows some means to the king:
they have letters for him. Ere we were two days old
at sea, a pirate of very warlike appointment gave us
chase. Finding ourselves too slow of sail, we put on a
compelled valor, and in the grapple I boarded them: on
the instant they got clear of our ship; so I alone became
their prisoner. They have dealt with me like thieves of

mercy: but they knew what they did; I am to do a good turn for them. Let the king have the letters I have sent; and repair thou to me with as much speed as thou wouldst fly death. I have words to speak in thine ear will make thee dumb; yet are they much too light for the bore of the matter. These good fellows will bring thee where I am. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern hold their course for England: of them I have much to tell thee. Farewell. 30

‘He that thou knowest thine, HAMLET.’

Come, I will make you way for these your letters;
And do’t the speedier, that you may direct me
To him from whom you brought them. [Exeunt. 5

SCENE VII. *Another room in the castle.*

Enter KING and LAERTES.

King. Now must your conscience my acquittance seal,
And you must put me in your heart for friend,
Sith you have heard, and with a knowing ear,
That he which hath your noble father slain
Pursued my life. 5

Laer. It well appears: but tell me
Why you proceeded not against these feats,
So crimeful and so capital in nature,
As by your safety, wisdom, all things else,
You mainly were stirred up.

King. O, for two special reasons;
Which may to you, perhaps, seem much unsinewed, 10
But yet to me they are strong. The queen his mother
Lives almost by his looks; and for myself —
My virtue or my plague, be it either which —

She's so conjunctive to my life and soul,
 That, as the star moves not but in his sphere, 15
 I could not but by her. The other motive,
 Why to a public count I might not go,
 Is the great love the general gender bear him;
 Who, dipping all his faults in their affection,
 Would, like the spring that turneth wood to stone, 20
 Convert his gyves to graces; so that my arrows,
 Too slightly timbered for so loud a wind,
 Would have reverted to my bow again,
 And not where I had aimed them.

Laer. And so have I a noble father lost; 25
 A sister driven into desperate terms,
 Whose worth, if praises may go back again,
 Stood challenger on mount of all the age
 For her perfections: but my revenge will come.

King. Break not your sleeps for that: you must not 30
 think
 That we are made of stuff so flat and dull
 That we can let our beard be shook with danger
 And think it pastime. You shortly shall hear more:
 I loved your father, and we love ourself;
 And that, I hope, will teach you to imagine — 35

Enter a Messenger.

How now! what news?

Mess. Letters, my lord, from Hamlet:
 This to your majesty; this to the queen.

King. From Hamlet! who brought them?

Mess. Sailors, my lord, they say; I saw them not:
 They were given me by Claudio; he received them 40
 Of him that brought them.

King. Laertes, you shall hear them.
Leave us. [Exit Messenger.]

[*Reads*] 'High and mighty, You shall know I am set naked on your kingdom. To-morrow shall I beg leave to see your kingly eyes: when I shall, first asking your pardon thereunto, recount the occasion of my sudden and more strange return.'

'HAMLET.'

What should this mean? Are all the rest come back? 50
Or is it some abuse, and no such thing?

Laer. Know you the hand?

King. 'T is Hamlet's character. 'Naked!' 60
And in a postscript here, he says 'alone.'
Can you advise me?

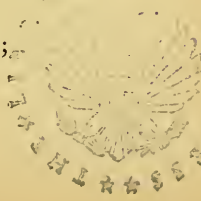
Laer. I'm lost in it, my lord. But let him come; 55
It warms the very sickness in my heart,
That I shall live and tell him to his teeth,
'Thus didest thou.'

King. If it be so, Laertes —
As how should it be so? how otherwise? —
Will you be ruled by me? 60

Laer. Ay, my lord;
So you will not o'errule me to a peace.

King. To thine own peace. If he be now returned,
As checking at his voyage, and that he means
No more to undertake it, I will work him
To an exploit, now ripe in my device, 65
Under the which he shall not choose but fall:
And for his death no wind of blame shall breathe,
But even his mother shall uncharge the practice
And call it accident.

Laer. My lord, I will be ruled;



The rather, if you could devise it so 70
That I might be the organ.

King. It falls right.

You have been talked of since your travel much,
And that in Hamlet's hearing, for a quality
Wherein, they say, you shine: your sum of parts
Did not together pluck such envy from him 75
As did that one, and that, in my regard,
Of the unworthiest siege.

Laer. What part is that, my lord?

King. A very riband in the cap of youth,
Yet needful too; for youth no less becomes
The light and careless livery that it wears 80
Than settled age his sables and his weeds,
Importing health and graveness. Two months since,
Here was a gentleman of Normandy:—
I've seen myself, and served against, the French,
And they can well on horseback: but this gallant 85
Had witchcraft in 't; he grew unto his seat;
And to such wondrous doing brought his horse,
As he had been incorpsed and demi-natured
With the brave beast: so far he topped my thought,
That I, in forgery of shapes and tricks, 90
Come short of what he did.

Laer. A Norman was 't?

King. A Norman.

Laer. Upon my life, Lamond.

King. The very same.

Laer. I know him well: he is the brooch indeed
And gem of all the nation. 95

King. He made confession of you,
And gave you such a masterly report

For art and exercise in your defence
And for your rapier most especially,
That he cried out, 't would be a sight indeed, 100
If one could match you: the scrimers of their nation,
He swore, had neither motion, guard, nor eye,
If you opposed them. Sir, this report of his
Did Hamlet so envenom with his envy
That he could nothing do but wish and beg 105
Your sudden coming o'er, to play with him.
Now, out of this, —

Laer. What out of this, my lord?

King. Laertes, was your father dear to you?
Or are you like the painting of a sorrow,
A face without a heart? 110

Laer. Why ask you this?

King. Not that I think you did not love your father;
But that I know love is begun by time;
And that I see, in passages of proof,
Time qualifies the spark and fire of it.
There lives within the very flame of love 115
A kind of wick or snuff that will abate it;
And nothing is at a like goodness still;
For goodness, growing to a plurisy,
Dies in his own too much: that we would do,
We should do when we would; for this 'would' changes
And hath abatements and delays as many 121
As there are tongues, are hands, are accidents;
And then this 'should' is like a spendthrift sigh,
That hurts by easing. But, to the quick o' the ulcer: —
Hamlet comes back: what would you undertake, 125
To show yourself your father's son in deed
More than in words?

Laer. To cut his throat i' the church.

King. No place, indeed, should murder sanctuarize ;
 Revenge should have no bounds. But, good Laertes,
 Will you do this, keep close within your chamber. 130
 Hamlet returned shall know you are come home :
 We'll put on those shall praise your excellence
 And set a double varnish on the fame
 The Frenchman gave you, bring you in fine together
 And wager on your heads : he, being remiss, 135
 Most generous and free from all contriving,
 Will not peruse the foils ; so that, with ease,
 Or with a little shuffling, you may choose
 A sword unbated, and in a pass of practice
 Requite him for your father. 140

Laer. I will do 't :
 And, for that purpose, I'll anoint my sword.
 I bought an unction of a mountebank,
 So mortal that, but dip a knife in it,
 Where it draws blood no cataplasm so rare,
 Collected from all simples that have virtue 145
 Under the moon, can save the thing from death
 That is but scratched withal : I'll touch my point
 With this contagion, that, if I gall him slightly,
 It may be death.

King. Let's further think of this ;
 Weigh what convenience both of time and means 150
 May fit us to our shape : if this should fail,
 And that our drift look through our bad performance,
 'T were better not assayed : therefore this project
 Should have a back or second, that might hold,
 If this should blast in proof. Soft ! let me see : 155
 We'll make a solemn wager on your cunnings :

I ha't:

When in your motion you are hot and dry —
As make your bouts more violent to that end —
And that he calls for drink, I'll have prepared him 160
A chalice for the nonce, whereon but sipping,
If he by chance escape your venom'd stuck,
Our purpose may hold there.

Enter QUEEN.

How now, sweet queen!

Queen. One woe doth tread upon another's heel,
So fast they follow: your sister's drowned, Laertes. 165

Laer. Drowned! O, where?

Queen. There is a willow grows aslant a brook,
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream;
There with fantastic garlands did she come
Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples 170
That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,
But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call them:
There, on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds
Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke;
When down her weedy trophies and herself 175
Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide;
And, mermaid-like, awhile they bore her up:
Which time she chanted snatches of old tunes;
As one incapable of her own distress,
Or like a creature native and indued 180
Unto that element: but long it could not be
Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,
Pulled the poor wretch from her melodious lay
To muddy death.

Laer. Alas, then, she is drowned?

Queen. Drowned, drowned. 185

Laer. Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia,
And therefore I forbid my tears: but yet
It is our trick; nature her custom holds,
Let shame say what it will: when these are gone,
The woman will be out. Adieu, my lord: 190
I have a speech of fire, that fain would blaze,
But that this folly douts it. [*Exit.*

King. Let's follow, Gertrude:
How much I had to do to calm his rage!
Now fear I this will give it start again;
Therefore let's follow. [*Exeunt.* 195

ACT V.

SCENE I. *A churchyard.*

Enter two Clowns, with spades, &c.

First Clo. Is she to be buried in Christian burial that wilfully seeks her own salvation?

Sec. Clo. I tell thee she is: and therefore make her grave straight: the crowner hath sat on her, and finds it Christian burial. 5

First Clo. How can that be, unless she drowned herself in her own defence?

Sec. Clo. Why, 't is found so.

First Clo. It must be 'se offendendo;' it cannot be else. For here lies the point: if I drown myself wittingly, it argues an act: and an act hath three branches; it is, to act, to do, to perform: argal, she drowned herself wittingly.

Sec. Clo. Nay, but hear you, goodman delver, — 15

First Clo. Give me leave. Here lies the water;

good: here stands the man; good: if the man go to this water, and drown himself, it is, will he, nill he, he goes,—mark you that; but if the water come to him and drown him, he drowns not himself: argal, he that is not guilty of his own death shortens not his own life. 22

Sec. Clo. But is this law?

First Clo. Ay, marry, is 't; crowner's quest law. 25

Sec. Clo. Will you ha' the truth on 't? If this had not been a gentlewoman, she should have been buried out o' Christian burial.

First Clo. Why, there thou say'st: and the more pity that great folk should have countenance in this world to drown or hang themselves, more than their even Christian. Come, my spade. There is no ancient gentlemen but gardeners, ditchers, and grave-makers: they hold up Adam's profession. 35

Sec. Clo. Was he a gentleman?

First Clo. He was the first that ever bore arms.

Sec. Clo. Why, he had none. 39

First Clo. What, art a heathen? How dost thou understand the Scripture? The Scripture says 'Adam digged:' could he dig without arms? I'll put another question to thee: if thou answerest me not to the purpose, confess thyself—

Sec. Clo. Go to. 45

First Clo. What is he that builds stronger than either the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter?

Sec. Clo. The gallows-maker; for that frame outlives a thousand tenants. 50

First Clo. I like thy wit well, in good faith: the gallows does well; but how does it well? it does well to those that do ill: now thou dost ill to say the gallows is

built stronger than the church: argal, the gallows may do well to thee. To 't again, come. 56

Sec. Clo. 'Who builds stronger than a mason, a shipwright, or a carpenter?'

First Clo. Ay, tell me that, and unyoke.

Sec. Clo. Marry, now I can tell. 60

First Clo. To 't.

Sec. Clo. Mass, I cannot tell.

Enter HAMLET and HORATIO, at a distance.

First Clo. Cudgel thy brains no more about it, for your dull ass will not mend his pace with beating; and, when you are asked this question next, say 'a grave-maker:' the houses that he makes last till doomsday. Go, get thee to Yaughan: fetch me a stoup of liquor. 68

[*He digs, and sings.*]

[*Exit Sec. Clown.*]

In youth, when I did love, did love,

Methought it was very sweet, 70

To contract, O, the time, for, ah, my behove,

O, methought, there was nothing meet.

Ham. Has this fellow no feeling of his business, that he sings at grave-making?

Hor. Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness. 76

Ham. 'T is e'en so: the hand of little employment hath the daintier sense.

First Clo. [*Sings*]

But age, with his stealing steps,

Hath clawed me in his clutch, 80

And hath shipped me intil the land,

As if I had never been such.

[*Throws up a skull.*]

Ham. That skull had a tongue in it, and could sing once: how the knave jowls it to the ground, as if it were Cain's jaw-bone, that did the first murder! It might be the pate of a politician, which this ass now o'er-reaches; one that would circumvent God, might it not? 88

Hor. It might, my lord.

Ham. Or of a courtier; which could say 'Good morrow, sweet lord! How dost thou, good lord?' This might be my lord such-a-one, that praised my lord such-a-one's horse, when he meant to beg it; might it not? 94

Hor. Ay, my lord. 95

Ham. Why, e'en so: and now my Lady Worm's; chapless, and knocked about the mazzard with a sexton's spade: here's fine revolution, an we had the trick to see 't. Did these bones cost no more the breeding, but to play at loggats with 'em? Mine ache to think on 't. 101

First Clo. [*Sings*]

A pick-axe, and a spade, a spade,

For and a shrouding sheet:

O, a pit of clay for to be made

For such a guest is meet. 105

[*Throws up another skull.*]

Ham. There's another: why may not that be the skull of a lawyer? Where be his quiddities now, his quilllets, his cases, his tenures, and his tricks? why does he suffer this rude knave now to knock him about the sconce with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his action of battery? Hum! This fellow might be in 's time a great buyer of land, with his statutes, his recognizances, his fines, his double vouchers, his recoveries: is this the fine of his fines, and the recovery of his recoveries, to have his fine pate full of fine dirt? Will

his vouchers vouch him no more of his purchases, and double ones too, than the length and breadth of a pair of indentures? The very conveyances of his lands will hardly lie in this box; and must the inheritor himself have no more, ha?

121

Hor. Not a jot more, my lord.

Ham. Is not parchment made of sheep-skins?

Hor. Ay, my lord, and of calf-skins too.

Ham. They are sheep and calves which seek out assurance in that. I will speak to this fellow. Whose grave's this, sirrah?

127

First Clo. Mine, sir.

[*Sings*] O, a pit of clay for to be made

For such a guest is meet.

130

Ham. I think it be thine, indeed; for thou liest in't.

First Clo. You lie out on't, sir, and therefore it is not yours: for my part, I do not lie in't, and yet it is mine.

135

Ham. Thou dost lie in't, to be in't and say it is thine: 'tis for the dead, not for the quick; therefore thou liest.

First Clo. 'Tis a quick lie, sir; 't will away again, from me to you.

140

Ham. What man dost thou dig it for?

First Clo. For no man, sir.

Ham. What woman, then?

First Clo. For none, neither.

Ham. Who is to be buried in't?

145

First Clo. One that was a woman, sir; but, rest her soul, she's dead.

Ham. How absolute the knave is! We must speak

by the card, or equivocation will undo us. By the Lord, Horatio, these three years I have taken a note of it; the age is grown so picked that the toe of the peasant comes so near the heel of the courtier, he galls his kibe. How long hast thou been a grave-maker? 154

First Clo. Of all the days i' the year, I came to 't that day that our last king Hamlet overcame Fortinbras. 157

Ham. How long is that since?

First Clo. Cannot you tell that? Every fool can tell that: it was the very day that young Hamlet was born; he that is mad, and sent into England. 162

Ham. Ay, marry, why was he sent into England?

First Clo. Why, because he was mad: he shall recover his wits there; or, if he do not, it's no great matter there. 167

Ham. Why?

First Clo. 'T will not be seen in him there; there the men are as mad as he. 170

Ham. How came he mad?

First Clo. Very strangely, they say.

Ham. How strangely?

First Clo. Faith, e'en with losing his wits.

Ham. Upon what ground? 175

First Clo. Why, here in Denmark: I have been sexton here, man and boy, thirty years.

Ham. How long will a man lie i' the earth ere he rot? 179

First Clo. I' faith, if he be not rotten before he die—as we have many pocky corsers now-a-days, that will scarce hold the laying in—he will last you some eight year or nine year: a tanner will last you nine year.

Ham. Why he more than another? 185

First Clo. Why, sir, his hide is so tanned with his trade, that he will keep out water a great while; and your water is a sore decayer of your whoreson dead body. Here's a skull now; this skull has lain in the earth three and twenty years. 191

Ham. Whose was it?

First Clo. A whoreson mad fellow's it was: whose do you think it was?

Ham. Nay, I know not. 195

First Clo. A pestilence on him for a mad rogue: a' poured a flagon of Rhenish on my head once. This same skull, sir, was Yorick's skull, the king's jester.

Ham. This? 200

First Clo. E'en that.

Ham. Let me see. [*Takes the skull.*] Alas, poor Yorick! I knew him, Horatio: a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy: he hath borne me on his back a thousand times; and now, how abhorred in my imagination it is! My gorge rises at it. Here hung those lips that I have kissed I know not how oft. Where be your gibes now, your gambols, your songs, your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar? Not one now, to mock your own grinning,—quite chap-fallen? Now get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favor she must come; make her laugh at that. Prithee, Horatio, tell me one thing. 216

Hor. What's that, my lord?

Ham. Dost thou think Alexander looked o' this fashion i' the earth?

Hor. E'en so. 220

Ham. And smelt so? pah! [*Puts down the skull.*]

Hor. E'en so, my lord.

Ham. To what base uses we may return, Horatio! Why may not imagination trace the noble dust of Alexander, till he find it stopping a bung-hole? 226

Hor. 'T were to consider too curiously, to consider so.

Ham. No, faith, not a jot; but to follow him thither with modesty enough, and likelihood to lead it: as thus: Alexander died, Alexander was buried, Alexander returneth into dust; the dust is earth; of earth we make loam; and why of that loam, whereto he was converted, might they not stop a beer-barrel? 235

Imperious Cæsar, dead and turned to clay,

Might stop a hole to keep the wind away:

O, that that earth, which kept the world in awe,

Should patch a wall to expel the winter's flaw!

But soft; but soft; aside: here comes the king. 240

Enter Priests, &c. in procession; the Corpse of OPHELIA, LAERTES and Mourners following; KING, QUEEN, their trains, &c.

The queen, the courtiers: who is this they follow?

And with such maimed rites? This doth betoken

The corse they follow did with desperate hand

Fordo, its own life: 't was of some estate.

Couch we awhile, and mark. 245

[Retiring with Horatio.]

Laer. What ceremony else?

Ham. That is Laertes,

A very noble youth: mark.

Laer. What ceremony else?

First Priest. Her obsequies have been as far enlarged As we have warrantise: her death was doubtful; 250 And, but that great command o'ersways the order,

She should in ground unsanctified have lodged
 Till the last trumpet; for charitable prayers,
 Shards, flints and pebbles should be thrown on her:
 Yet here she is allowed her virgin crants, 255
 Her maiden strewments and the bringing home
 Of bell and burial.

Laer. Must there no more be done?

First Priest. No more be done:

We should profane the service of the dead
 To sing a requiem and such rest to her 260
 As to peace-parted souls.

Laer. Lay her i' the earth:
 And from her fair and unpolluted flesh
 May violets spring! I tell thee, churlish priest,
 A ministering angel shall my sister be,
 When thou liest howling. 265

Ham. What, the fair Ophelia!

Queen. Sweets to the sweet: farewell!

[*Scattering flowers.*

I hoped thou shouldst have been my Hamlet's wife;
 I thought thy bride-bed to have decked, sweet maid,
 And not have strewed thy grave.

Laer. O, treble woe
 Fall ten times treble on that cursed head, 270
 Whose wicked deed thy most ingenious sense
 Deprived thee of! Hold off the earth awhile,
 Till I have caught her once more in mine arms:

[*Leaps into the grave.*

Now pile your dust upon the quick and dead,
 Till of this flat a mountain you have made, 275
 To o'ertop old Pelion, or the skyish head
 Of blue Olympus.

Ham. [*Advancing*] What is he whose grief
Bears such an emphasis, — whose phrase of sorrow
Conjures the wandering stars, and makes them stand
Like wonder-wounded hearers? This is I, 280
Hamlet the Dane. [*Leaps into the grave.*]

Laer. The devil take thy soul!
[*Grappling with him.*]

Ham. Thou pray'st not well.
I prithee, take thy fingers from my throat;
For, though I am not splenitive and rash,
Yet have I something in me dangerous, 285
Which let thy wiseness fear; hold off thy hand.

King. Pluck them asunder.

Queen. Hamlet, Hamlet!

All. Gentlemen, —

Hor. Good my lord, be quiet.

[*The Attendants part them, and they come out of the grave.*]

Ham. Why, I will fight with him upon this theme
Until my eyelids will no longer wag. 290

Queen. O my son, what theme?

Ham. I loved Ophelia: forty thousand brothers
Could not, with all their quantity of love,
Make up my sum. What wilt thou do for her?

King. O, he is mad, Laertes.

Queen. For love of God, forbear him.

Ham. 'Swounds, show me what thou 'lt do:
Woo't weep, woo't fight, woo't fast, woo't tear thy-
self?

Woo't drink up eisel, — eat a crocodile?

I'll do 't. Dost thou come here to whine, — 300
To outface me with leaping in her grave?

Be buried quick with her, and so will I:
 And, if thou prate of mountains, let them throw
 Millions of acres on us, till our ground,
 Singeing his pate against the burning zone, 305
 Make Ossa like a wart! Nay, an thou'lt mouth,
 I'll rant as well as thou.

Queen. This is mere madness:
 And thus awhile the fit will work on him;
 Anon, as patient as the female dove,
 When that her golden couplets are disclosed, 310
 His silence will sit drooping.

Ham. Hear you, sir;
 What is the reason that you use me thus?
 I loved you ever: but it is no matter;
 Let Hercules himself do what he may,
 The cat will mew and dog will have his day. [*Exit.* 315

King. I pray you, good Horatio, wait upon him.

[*Exit Horatio.*

[*To Laertes*] Strengthen your patience in our last night's
 speech;

We'll put the matter to the present push.
 Good Gertrude, set some watch over your son.
 This grave shall have a living monument: 320
 An hour of quiet shortly shall we see;
 Till then, in patience our proceeding be. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *A hall in the castle.*

Enter HAMLET and HORATIO.

Ham. So much for this, sir: now shall you see the
 other;
 You do remember all the circumstance?

Hor. Remember it, my lord!

Ham. Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting,
That would not let me sleep: methought I lay 5
Worse than the mutines in the bilboes. Rashly,
And praised be rashness for it, let us know,
Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well,
When our deep plots do pall: and that should teach us
There's a divinity that shapes our ends, 10
Rough-hew them how we will, —

Hor. That is most certain.

Ham. Up from my cabin,
My sea-gown scarfed about me, in the dark
Groped I to find out them; had my desire,
Fingered their packet, and in fine withdrew 15
To mine own room again; making so bold,
My fears forgetting manners, to unseal
Their grand commission; where I found, Horatio, —
O royal knavery! — an exact command,
Larded with many several sorts of reasons 20
Importing Denmark's health and England's too,
With, ho! such bugs and goblins in my life,
That, on the supervise, no leisure bated,
No, not to stay the grinding of the axe,
My head should be struck off. 25

Hor. Is 't possible?

Ham. Here's the commission: read it at more leisure.

But wilt thou hear me how I did proceed?

Hor. I beseech you.

Ham. Being thus be-netted round with villanies, —
Ere I could make a prologue to my brains, 30
They had begun the play — I sat me down,

Devised a new commission, wrote it fair :
 I once did hold it, as our statists do,
 A baseness to write fair and labored much
 How to forget that learning, but, sir, now 35
 It did me yeoman's service : wilt thou know
 The effect of what I wrote ?

Hor. Ay, good my lord.

Ham. An earnest conjuration from the king,
 As England was his faithful tributary,
 As love between them like the palm might flourish, 40
 As peace should still her wheaten garland wear
 And stand a comma 'tween their amities,
 And many such-like 'As'es of great charge,
 That, on the view and knowing of these contents,
 Without debatement further, more or less, 45
 He should the bearers put to sudden death,
 Not shriving time allowed.

Hor. How was this sealed ?

Ham. Why, even in that was heaven ordinant.
 I had my father's signet in my purse,
 Which was the model of that Danish seal ; 50
 Folded the writ up in form of the other,
 Subscribed it, gave't the impression, placed it safely,
 The changeling never known. Now, the next day
 Was our sea-fight ; and what to this was sequent
 Thou know'st already. 55

Hor. So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go to't.

Ham. Why, man, they did make love to this employ-
 ment ;
 They are not near my conscience ; their defeat
 Does by their own insinuation grow :
 'Tis dangerous when the baser nature comes 60

Between the pass and fell incensed points
Of mighty opposites.

Hor. Why, what a king is this !

Ham. Does it not, thinks't thee, stand me now upon —
He that hath killed my king and stained my mother,
Popped in between the election and my hopes, 65
Thrown out his angle for my proper life,
And with such cozenage — is 't not perfect conscience,
To quit him with this arm ; and is 't not to be damned,
To let this canker of our nature come
In further evil ? 70

Hor. It must be shortly known to him from Eng-
land

What is the issue of the business there.

Ham. It will be short: the interim is mine;
And a man's life's no more than to say 'One.'
But I am very sorry, good Horatio, 75
That to Laertes I forgot myself;
For, by the image of my cause, I see
The portraiture of his: I'll court his favors:
But, sure, the bravery of his grief did put me
Into a towering passion. 80

Hor. Peace! who comes here?

Enter OSRIC.

Os. Your lordship is right welcome back to Den-
mark.

Ham. I humbly thank you, sir. Dost know this
water-fly?

Hor. No, my good lord. 85

Ham. Thy state is the more gracious; for 'tis a vice
to know him. He hath much land, and fertile: let a

beast be lord of beasts, and his crib shall stand at the king's mess: 'tis a chough; but, as I say, spacious in the possession of dirt. 90

Osr. Sweet lord, if your lordship were at leisure, I should impart a thing to you from his majesty.

Ham. I will receive it, sir, with all diligence of spirit. Put your bonnet to his right use; 'tis for the head. 96

Osr. I thank your lordship, it is very hot.

Ham. No, believe me, 'tis very cold; the wind is northerly.

Osr. It is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed. 100

Ham. But yet methinks it is very sultry and hot for my complexion.

Osr. Exceedingly, my lord; it is very sultry, — as 't were, — I cannot tell how. But, my lord, his majesty bade me signify to you that he has laid a great wager on your head: sir, this is the matter, — 106

Ham. I beseech you, remember —

[*Hamlet moves him to put on his hat.*]

Osr. Nay, good my lord; for mine ease, in good faith. Sir, here is newly come to court Laertes; believe me, an absolute gentleman, full of most excellent differences, of very soft society and great showing: indeed, to speak feelingly of him, he is the card or calendar of gentry, for you shall find in him the continent of what part a gentleman would see. 116

Ham. Sir, his definement suffers no perdition in you; though, I know, to divide him inventorially would dizzy the arithmetic of memory, and yet but yaw neither, in respect of his quick sail. But, in the verity of extolment, I take him to be a soul of great article; and his infusion of such dearth and rareness, as, to make true diction of

him, his semblable is his mirror; and who else would trace him, his umbrage, nothing more. 125

Osr. Your lordship speaks most infallibly of him.

Ham. The concernancy, sir? Why do we wrap the gentleman in our more rawer breath?

Osr. Sir? 130

Hor. Is't not possible to understand in another tongue? You will do't, sir, really.

Ham. What imports the nomination of this gentleman?

Osr. Of Laertes? 135

Hor. His purse is empty already; all's golden words are spent.

Ham. Of him, sir.

Osr. I know you are not ignorant —

Ham. I would you did, sir; yet, in faith, if you did, it would not much approve me. Well, sir? 141

Osr. You are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is —

Ham. I dare not confess that, lest I should compare with him in excellence; but, to know a man well, were to know himself. 147

Osr. I mean, sir, for his weapon; but in the imputation laid on him by them, in his meed he's unfellowed. 150

Ham. What's his weapon?

Osr. Rapier and dagger.

Ham. That's two of his weapons: but, well.

Osr. The king, sir, hath wagered with him six Barbary horses: against the which he has imponed, as I take it, six French rapiers and poniards, with their assigns, as girdle, hangers, and so: three of the carriages, in faith,

are very dear to fancy, very responsive to the hilts, most delicate carriages, and of very liberal conceit. 160

Ham. What call you the carriages?

Hor. I knew you must be edified by the margent ere you had done.

Osr. The carriages, sir, are the hangers.

Ham. The phrase would be more german to the matter, if we could carry cannon by our sides: I would it might be hangers till then. But, on: six Barbary horses against six French swords, their assigns, and three liberal-conceited carriages; that's the French bet against the Danish. Why is this 'imponed,' as you call it? 171

Osr. The king, sir, hath laid, that in a dozen passes between yourself and him, he shall not exceed you three hits: he hath laid on twelve for nine; and it would come to immediate trial, if your lordship would vouchsafe the answer. 176

Ham. How if I answer 'no'?

Osr. I mean, my lord, the opposition of your person in trial.

Ham. Sir, I will walk here in the hall: if it please his majesty, 't is the breathing time of day with me; let the foils be brought, the gentleman willing, and the king hold his purpose, I will win for him an I can; if not, I will gain nothing but my shame and the odd hits. 185

Osr. Shall I re-deliver you e'en so?

Ham. To this effect, sir; after what flourish your nature will.

Osr. I commend my duty to your lordship.

Ham. Yours, yours. [*Exit Osr.*] He does well to commend it himself; there are no tongues else for's turn. 192

Hor. This lapwing runs away with the shell on his head.

Ham. He did comply with his dug, before he sucked it. Thus has he—and many more of the same breed that I know the drossy age dotes on—only got the tune of the time and the outward habit of encounter; a kind of yesty collection, which carries them through and through the most fond and winnowed opinions; and do but blow them to their trial, the bubbles are out. 202

Enter a Lord.

Lord. My lord, his majesty commended him to you by young Osric, who brings back to him, that you attend him in the hall: he sends to know if your pleasure hold to play with Laertes, or that you will take longer time.

Ham. I am constant to my purposes; they follow the king's pleasure: if his fitness speaks, mine is ready; now or whensoever, provided I be so able as now.

Lord. The king and queen and all are coming down.

Ham. In happy time. 214

Lord. The Queen desires you to use some gentle entertainment to Laertes before you fall to play. 217

Ham. She well instructs me. [*Exit Lord.*]

Hor. You will lose this wager, my lord.

Ham. I do not think so: since he went into France, I have been in continual practice; I shall win at the odds. But thou wouldst not think how ill all's here about my heart: but it is no matter. 223

Hor. Nay, good my lord,—

Ham. It is but foolery; but it is such a kind of gain-giving as would perhaps trouble a woman. 226

Hor. If your mind dislike any thing, obey it: I will forestall their repair hither, and say you are not fit. 229

Ham. Not a whit, we defy augury: there's a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 't is not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all: since no man has aught of what he leaves, what is't to leave betimes? 235

Enter KING, QUEEN, LAERTES, LORDS, OSRIC and Attendants with foils, &c.

King. Come, Hamlet, come, and take this hand from me.

[*The King puts Laertes' hand into Hamlet's.*]

Ham. Give me your pardon, sir: I've done you wrong;

But pardon 't, as you are a gentleman.

This presence knows,

And you must needs have heard, how I am punished 240

With sore distraction. What I have done,

That might your nature, honor and exception

Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness.

Was 't Hamlet wronged Laertes? Never Hamlet:

If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away, 245

And when he's not himself does wrong Laertes,

Then Hamlet does it not, Hamlet denies it.

Who does it, then? His madness: if 't be so,

Hamlet is of the faction that is wronged;

His madness is poor Hamlet's enemy. 250

Sir, in this audience,

Let my disclaiming from a purposed evil

Free me so far in your most generous thoughts,

That I have shot mine arrow o'er the house,

And hurt my brother. 255

Laer. I am satisfied in nature,
Whose motive, in this case, should stir me most
To my revenge: but in my terms of honor
I stand aloof; and will no reconciliation,
Till by some elder masters, of known honor,
I have a voice and precedent of peace, 260
To keep my name ungored. But till that time,
I do receive your offered love like love,
And will not wrong it.

Ham. I embrace it freely;
And will this brother's wager frankly play.
Give us the foils. Come on. 265

Laer. Come, one for me.

Ham. I'll be your foil, Laertes: in mine ignorance
Your skill shall, like a star i' the darkest night,
Stick fiery off indeed.

Laer. You mock me, sir.

Ham. No, by this hand.

King. Give them the foils, young Osric. Cousin
Hamlet, 270
You know the wager?

Ham. Very well, my lord;
Your grace hath laid the odds o' the weaker side.

King. I do not fear it; I have seen you both:
But since he is bettered, we have therefore odds.

Laer. This is too heavy, let me see another. 275

Ham. This likes me well. These foils have all a
length? [*They prepare to play.*]

Os. Ay, my good lord.

King. Set me the stoups of wine upon that table.
If Hamlet give the first or second hit,
Or quit in answer of the third exchange, 280

Let all the battlements their ordnance fire;
 The king shall drink to Hamlet's better breath;
 And in the cup an union shall he throw,
 Richer than that which four successive kings
 In Denmark's crown have worn. Give me the cups; 285
 And let the kettle to the trumpet speak,
 The trumpet to the cannoneer without,
 The cannons to the heavens, the heavens to earth,
 'Now the king drinks to Hamlet.' Come, begin:
 And you, the judges, bear a wary eye. 290

Ham. Come on, sir.

Laer. Come, my lord. [*They play.*]

Ham. One.

Laer. No.

Ham. Judgement.

Osr. A hit, a very palpable hit.

Laer. Well; again.

King. Stay; give me drink. Hamlet, this pearl is
 thine;

Here's to thy health.

[*Trumpets sound, and cannon shot off within.*]

Give him the cup.

Ham. I'll play this bout first; set it by awhile. 295
 Come. [*They play.*] Another hit; what say you?

Laer. A touch, a touch, I do confess.

King. Our son shall win.

Queen. He's fat, and scant of breath.

Here, Hamlet, take my napkin, rub thy brows:

The queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet. 300

Ham. Good madam!

King. Gertrude, do not drink.

Queen. I will, my lord; I pray you, pardon me.

King. [*Aside*] It is the poisoned cup: it is too late.

Ham. I dare not drink yet, madam; by and by.

Queen. Come, let me wipe thy face. 305

Laer. My lord, I'll hit him now.

King. I do not think 't.

Laer. [*Aside*] And yet 'tis almost 'gainst my conscience.

Ham. Come, for the third, Laertes: you but dally;
I pray you, pass with your best violence;
I am afeard you make a wanton of me. 310

Laer. Say you so? Come on. [*They play.*]

Osr. Nothing, neither way.

Laer. Have at you now!

[*Laertes wounds Hamlet; then, in scuffling, they change rapiers, and Hamlet wounds Laertes.*]

King. Part them; they are incensed.

Ham. Nay, come, again. [*The Queen falls.*]

Osr. Look to the queen there, ho!

Hor. They bleed on both sides. How is it, my lord? 315

Osr. How is 't, Laertes?

Laer. Why, as a woodcock to mine own springe,
Osrise;
I am justly killed with mine own treachery.

Ham. How does the queen?

King. She swoonds to see them bleed.

Queen. No, no, the drink, the drink,—O my dear Hamlet,— 320

The drink, the drink! I am poisoned. [*Dies.*]

Ham. O villany! Ho! let the door be locked:
Treachery! Seek it out.

Laer. It is here, Hamlet: Hamlet, thou art slain;

No medicine in the world can do thee good; 325
In thee there is not half an hour of life;
The treacherous instrument is in thy hand,
Unbated and envenomed: the foul practice
Hath turned itself on me; lo, here I lie,
Never to rise again: thy mother's poisoned: 330
I can no more: the king, the king's to blame.

Ham. The point! — envenomed too!

Then, venom, to thy work. [*Stabs the King.*

All. Treason! treason!

King. O, yet defend me, friends; I am but hurt. 335

Ham. Here, thou incestuous, murderous, damned
Dane,

Drink off this potion. Is thy union here?

Follow my mother. [*King dies.*

Laer. He is justly served;

It is a poison tempered by himself.

Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet: 340

Mine and my father's death come not upon thee,

Nor thine on me! [*Dies.*

Ham. Heaven make thee free of it! I follow thee.

I am dead, Horatio. Wretched queen, adieu!

You that look pale and tremble at this chance, 345

That are but mutes or audience to this act,

Had I but time — as this fell sergeant, death,

Is strict in his arrest — O, I could tell you —

But let it be. Horatio, I am dead;

Thou livest; report me and my cause aright 350

To the unsatisfied.

Hor. Never believe it:

I am more an antique Roman than a Dane:

Here's yet some liquor left.

Ham. As thou'rt a man,
Give me the cup: let go; by heaven, I'll have't.
O good Horatio, what a wounded name, 355
Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind me!
If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
Absent thee from felicity awhile,
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,
To tell my story. 360

[March afar off, and shot within.]

What warlike noise is this?

Os. Young Fortinbras, with conquest come from
Poland,
To the ambassadors of England gives
This warlike volley.

Ham. O, I die, Horatio;
The potent poison quite o'er-crows my spirit:
I cannot live to hear the news from England; 365
But I do prophesy the election lights
On Fortinbras: he has my dying voice;
So tell him, with the occurrents, more and less,
Which have solicited. The rest is silence. [*Dies.*]

Hor. Now cracks a noble heart. Good night, sweet
prince; 370
And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!
Why does the drum come hither? [*March within.*]

Enter FORTINBRAS, the English Ambassadors, and others.

Fort. Where is this sight?

Hor. What is it ye would see?
If aught of woe or wonder, cease your search.

Fort. This quarry cries on havoc. O proud death, 375

Even while men's minds are wild; lest more mischance,
On plots and errors, happen. 406

Fort.

Let four captains

Bear Hamlet, like a soldier, to the stage;
For he was likely, had he been put on,
To have proved most royally: and, for his passage,
The soldiers' music and the rites of war 410
Speak loudly for him.

Take up the bodies: such a sight as this
Becomes the field, but here shows much amiss.
Go, bid the soldiers shoot.

[*A dead march. Exeunt, bearing off the dead bodies;
after which a peal of ordnance is shot off.*]

A LIST OF THE PERSONS OF THE DRAMA, WITH THE SCENES IN
WHICH THEY APPEAR.

CLAUDIUS	I 2, II 2, III 1 2 3, IV 1 3 5 7, V 1 2.
HAMLET	I 2 4 5, II 2, III 1 2 3 4, IV 2 3 4, V 1 2.
POLONIUS	I 2 3, II 1 2, III 1 2 3 4.
HORATIO	I 1 2 4 5, III 2, IV 5 6, V 1 2.
LAERTES	I 2 3, IV 5 7, V 1 2.
VOLTIMAND	I 2, II 2.
CORNELIUS	I 2, II 2.
ROSENCRANTZ	II 2, III 1 2 3, IV 1 2 3 4.
GUILDENSTERN	II 2, III 1 2 3, IV 1 2 3 4.
OSRIC	V 2.
A Gentleman	IV 5.
A Priest	V 1.
MARCELLUS	I 1 2 4 5.
BERNARDO	I 1 2.
FRANCISCO	I 1.
REYNALDO	II 1.
Players	II 2, III 2.
Two Clowns	V 1.
FORTINBRAS	IV 4, V 2.
A Captain	IV 4.
English Ambassadors	V 2.
GERTRUDE	I 2, II 2, III 1 2 4, IV 1 5 7, V 1 2.
OPHELIA	I 3, II 1, III 1 2, IV 5.
Ghost	I 1 4 5, III 4.

NOTES.

“HAMLET,” says Professor Dowden, “represents the mid period of the growth of Shakespeare’s genius, when comedy and history ceased to be adequate for the expression of his deeper thoughts and sadder feelings about life, and when he was entering upon his great series of tragic writings.” — With the exception of *Romeo and Juliet*, — a distinctly early production, — all the great tragedies group themselves together in the first years of the seventeenth century. In this group of tragedies, *Hamlet* stands, in the order of time, the second. The first of the series is *Julius Cæsar* (1601), and the last is *Coriolanus* (1608).

The inquisitive *Hamlet* student will find it interesting to examine the problem of the exact date of the play. The relation of the first quarto, published in 1603, and now extant, so far as known, in only two copies, to the next quarto, of 1604, which gives the tragedy in its final and accepted form, constitutes one of the many riddles that tease the Shakespeare scholar. The first quarto is reprinted entire in their notes by Wright, — *Cambridge Shakespeare*, Vol. IX, — and by Furness, — *Variorum Hamlet*, Vol. II. These editors also explain the significance of this early quarto as bearing on our knowledge of the poet’s method of composition.

As to the source from which Shakespeare drew the plot, or suggestions of the plot, of *Hamlet*, — for absolutely original in all the elements of his fable he never is, — it is certain that there existed already, before his day, a popular play on the same subject, — though no such play is now extant; and it is probable that he read the *Hamlet* story as told by the Frenchman, Belleforest, in his *Histoires Tragiques*, a book that was much read in the poet’s youth, though the oldest known translation into English bears date 1608. It is not likely that he knew the story in its oldest form, as it appears in the Latin of Saxo Grammaticus, — whose *Historia Danica* was completed about the beginning of the thirteenth century. It is interesting thus to trace *Hamlet* to its birth in the age

of mingled history and myth, whence all the greatest ancient as well as modern poetry has sprung.

Some of the difficulties you encounter in the reading of Shakespeare are petty obscurities of language that will vanish when you consult your International Webster or your Century. Certain other difficulties belong essentially to the Shakespearian idiom, and are fully mastered only when they have occurred two or three times, and have found lodgement in your memory. Just as soon as you begin to recognize a word or an expression because you have seen it before, you begin to know it. You will do well not only to look up all the cross references to which these notes direct you, but to find out others for yourself. He who can, all by himself, illustrate play with play, and poet with poet, comes at last to feel diminished dependence on external help, and to find new enjoyment in his reading.

ACT I.

Scene 1.

2. **Nay, answer me.** Francisco's *nay* expresses reproof, and his *answer me* must be read, not as an appeal, but as a correction, with accent on the pronoun. Bernardo has violated the order of military procedure, which requires that the sentinel on duty shall challenge any one who approaches him. Bernardo, in his trepidation challenging the sentinel, has first to be set right as to form: then he receives Francisco's challenge, advances, and gives the countersign.

13. **The rivals of my watch.** Note the lost meaning of *rival*. See rivalry, Ant. and Cle. iii 5 8. *Rival* has an interesting history.

14. **Stand, ho! who's there?** Though now duly relieved by his successor on the post, and therefore no longer sentinel, Francisco challenges the approaching Horatio and Marcellus. Then he goes off, to be no more heard of during the play.

18. **Give you good night.** The phrase has here lost only its nominative. As we now use it, it no longer has nominative, verb, or dative, and we have forgotten that it ever was a complete sen-

tence. Compare *As You Like It* v 1 16; *Tit. And.* iv 4 42; *Rom.* and *Jul.* i 2 57.

21-29. The words by which Marcellus refers to the ghost that they have seen present an interesting climax of definiteness and directness. Show how the scene gains in dramatic vigor by this gradual approach to its main theme.

33, 34. *sit we down and let us hear.* These verb-forms are usually called imperatives of the first person. They would be more correctly described as expressions of wish or exhortation addressed by one of a group to the entire group, in which the speaker includes himself. The imperative proper is confined to the second person. In *sit we*, *sit* is subjunctive. In *let us hear*, *let* is imperative plural, and *hear* infinitive. The latter form is periphrastic, and in modern English has prevailed entirely over the older and simpler subjunctive phrase.

42. *Thou art a scholar; speak to it.* The conjuring and exorcising of spirits was, in real life, traditionally performed in Latin. See *2 Henry VI.* i 4 1-40. On the stage of course this business had usually to be managed in English: and yet it remained peculiarly the scholar's function. See *Much Ado* ii 1 264. The power of effective speech is in Shakespeare eminently the note of the scholar. See *L. L. Lost* iv 2 9; *Shrew* i 2 159; *Hamlet* iii 1 159.

44. *It harrows me.* Compare *Hamlet* i 5 16.

65. *jump at this dead hour.* What part of speech is *jump* here? Compare *Hamlet* v 2 386; *Othello* ii 3 392.

70. *Good now.* With these words Marcellus seems to appeal gently to the others to discuss more in detail the *strange eruption to our state* which Horatio has vaguely presaged. Read *Good now* with upward inflection.

tell me he that knows. *He* is the subject of *tell*, which is in the subjunctive, with the force of a command or exhortation.

72. *toils the subject.* Illustrate this use of the verb *toil* by reference to *2 Henry VI.* i 1 83; *Dream* v 1 74. See *subject* used again in this sense, *Hamlet* i 2 33; *Meas. for Meas.* iii 2 145. So the Latin word *miles*, as in Virgil's *late loca milite complent*.

77. *What might be toward.* A very common use of *toward*, as in *Hamlet* v 2 376; *Lear* ii 1 11.

87. **heraldry.** See, besides the dictionary, the other instances of the use of the word in Shakespeare: *Dream* iii 2 213; *All's Well* ii 3 280; *Hamlet* ii 2 478; *Othello* iii 4 47.

94. **carriage** must be understood as meaning *import* or *tenor*, and as referring to the stipulations of the article designed or mentioned above, in line 86, as a *sealed compact*.

107. The word **romage**, or *rummage*, has an interesting origin.

108. **I think it be.** The use of this particular subjunctive form, *be*, with *think*, is very frequent. See *Hamlet* v 1 131; *Cymbeline* i 1 9; *As You Like It* ii 7 1. Hardly less frequent is the indicative form *is* in the same connection. See *As You Like It* iii 4 23, 29; *Othello* iv 2 196; iv 3 99. Any other verb than *be* in the subjunctive after *think* is rare. To make any distinction in these cases as regards meaning is difficult. Note, as of peculiar interest, *Othello* iii 3 384.

109. **Well may it sort.** That is, it is quite in harmony with your theory of the cause of the warlike preparations which we see going on in the state. See 3 *Henry VI.* v 5 26; *Henry V.* iv 1 63. Note the verb *sort* used transitively, *Hamlet* ii 2 274; *Richard III.* ii 3 36.

117. **As stars with trains of fire, etc.** The language implies an ellipsis of something preceding. Supply such a phrase as, — *such things were seen*.

118. **Disasters in the sun.** The etymology of the word *disaster* helps explain its use in this expression. See *Lear* i 2 131.

the moist star. See *Wint. Tale* i 2 1.

154. **The extravagant and erring spirit.** Both these adjectives have the simple meaning due them by their etymology; and both have come to have quite other meanings in modern English.

156. **made probation:** gave proof.

158. **'Gainst that season comes.** So in *Dream* iii 2 99; *Shrew* iv 4 104.

162. **no planets strike.** So we say *sun-struck*, *moon-struck*.

163. **No fairy takes.** Just as we still say, a vaccination *takes*.

166. **in russet mantle clad.** Recall Milton's use of the word *russet*, *Allegro* 71.

Describe the situation as developed in the first scene. How is this situation reflected in the minds of men ?

Scene 2.

2. The word **that** serves instead of a repeated *though*, as *que* is often used in French. In modern English the *though* would either be repeated or left to be understood.

13. **delight and dole**. Note the alliteration.

14. **barred**: that is, failed to consult.

17. Now follows **that you know**. The *know* is probably subjunctive, and the sentence means, — *I will now proceed to inform you*.

21. **Colleagued with the dream** of his advantage: fancying he sees a chance to take advantage of us.

29. **bedrid**. This is the primitive form, and is more correct than *bedridden*. Look up the history of the word.

31. **his further gait**. *Gait* is etymologically the same word as *gate*, derived from the root of the verb *get*. Do not connect it with *go*.

38. **The scope of these dilated articles**. The king warns his envoys not to transcend the powers conferred upon them; and in the words quoted directs them to examine their instructions in detail, to make sure of the limits of their authority. *Dilated* seems to mean, *carefully analyzed*. — Note the grammatical error in *allow*.

63. **And thy best graces spend it at thy will**: spend it for your improvement in those accomplishments which you most esteem.

65. **A little more than kin and less than kind**. Hamlet refers to the king's words, *my cousin and my son*. It is as if he should say, — yes, I am more to you now than mere cousin (we should say, *nephew*); but less than child. Just what meaning was conveyed to an Elizabethan public by the word *kind* we cannot now quite understand. The alliterative coupling of *kin* and *kind* had perhaps brought into vogue a proverb known to everybody, giving to Hamlet's words point and relevancy.

Hamlet's first words in the play are therefore an aside. Describe the first impression which we form of his character.

67. **I am too much in the sun.** Perhaps, with punning reference to *son*, Hamlet expresses his irritation at being called son by the king.

70. **thy vailed lids.** See the same expression, Venus and Adonis 956. See also Merchant i 1 28; Pericles ii 3 42.

87. Comparing the verse passages in which the word *commendable* occurs, we find it accented sometimes on the first syllable, and sometimes on the second. If in this instance we accent the first syllable, we must read the verse as an alexandrine. Abbott, (Shakespearian Grammar), objecting to lines of six accents, reads thus:

'T is sweet and commendable in your nature, Hamlet.

The reader must take his choice.

95. **a will most incorrect to heaven.** Think out modern phrases for the expression of this idea.

112. **Do I impart toward you.** Verses 110-112 are troublesome to construe. The best way to read them is, to forget, as soon as you have read 110, that it contains a *with*. Then still remains the unsatisfactory, but intelligible, *toward*.

119. The line reads naturally as an alexandrine, with pause in the middle. It may be reduced to regular form by making the last two syllables of Wittenberg a dissyllabic light ending.

124. **Sits smiling to my heart.** Similar uses of *sit* are common in Chaucer. See Duchesse 1220; Hit nas no game, it sat me sore.

137. **possess it merely.** The adverb belongs, of course, grammatically, to the verb; though logically it limits the subject.

140. **Hyperion to a satyr.** Shakespeare ascribes to Hyperion, god of the sun, characteristics strictly proper to Apollo. See description of *satyrs* in classical dictionary.

159. **break my heart.** *My heart* is the subject of *break*, and is not in the vocative. Read without pause after *break*.

163. Be sure you accent the line properly.

164. **What make you?** How should we ask this question to-day?

182. **my dearest foe.** Dr. Murray shows that *dear* in this sense is a radically different word from *dear* meaning beloved or

esteemed. See Richard II. i 3 151; Timon v 1 231; Sonnet 37; Lycidas 6.

183. **Or ever I had seen.** Recall Ecclesiastes xii 6.

190. **Saw? Who?** You cannot inflect these questions wrongly if you apprehend the situation. Beginners often read them so as to destroy their meaning.

192. **Season your admiration.** To learn the meaning of the verb *season* in this play, study the cases where it occurs, viz.: i 3 81; ii 1 28; iii 2 219; iii 3 86.

198. **In the dead vast and middle of the night.** See Tempest i 2 327; Pericles iii 1 1.

200. **Armed at point exactly, cap-a-pe.** See the phrase *at point*, Macbeth iv 3 135; Lear i 4 347. The modern *de pied en cap* you will find in any French dictionary under *cap*.

204. **with the act of fear.** We should say, by the action, or by the operation, or under the influence, of fear.

206. Find conventional modern phrase that shall express with equal force the idea of the words, *in dreadful secrecy*.

230. **his beaver.** So 1 Henry IV. iv 1 104; 2 Henry IV. iv 1 120 and often elsewhere. Do not imagine that this word *beaver* has any kinship with the name of the fur-bearing rodent.

231. With the verb *look* the poet usually employs the adverb to complete the predicate. What is the modern usage in this matter?

238. **tell a hundred.** See Dream v 1 370; Sonnet 30; Richard III. i 4 122. This is the primitive meaning of *tell*.

242. **I will watch to-night.** What word bears the emphasis?

245. **should gape and bid me.** As to the meaning of *gape*, get a suggestion from Henry VIII. v 4 1-3.

248. **Let it be tenable in your silence.** To say that the secret is tenable in your silence is to say that you are capable of holding, or keeping, the secret.

Scene 3.

6. **a fashion and a toy in blood.** *Fashion* Polonius will help you to interpret in line 112 below. *Toy* is defined in 1 Henry VI. iv 1 145. See a good comment on *blood* in Hamlet iii 2 74.

7. **primy** is perhaps a Shakespearian coinage. It occurs only here.

9. **suppliance of a minute** : what the passing minute supplies.

15. The words of the line are all explained by the dictionaries. See *Coriolanus* iv 1 33 ; *Cæsar* ii 1 129 ; *L. L. Lost* ii 1 47 ; *Henry V.* iv 3 110.

30. The word **credent**, here used actively, and meaning *credulous*, the poet, with his wonted confusion of voice, elsewhere sometimes uses to mean *credible*. See *Meas.* for *Meas.* iv 4 29.

34-35. Note the military figures.

36-37. **The chariest maid**, etc. The superlative seems strangely out of place. We should expect, rather, the "unchariest." As it is, we must make *chariest* mean, — really chary.

39-42. From what source are drawn the figures of these lines ? See the word *disclose* with zoological application, *Hamlet* iii 1 174 ; v 1 310. See also *2 Henry VI.* iii 1 89 ; *Two Gent.* i 1 48.

46-51. Note the anacoluthon in Ophelia's speech, and rectify her language in accordance with modern standards. On *puffed* compare *Hamlet* iv 4 49.

59. **See thou character**. Character is here in the subjunctive to the eye as well as to the understanding. See the word similarly used, but differently accented, *As You like It* iii 2 6.

60. **unproportioned** : unfitting, improper.

62, 63. The syntax can hardly be corrected without enfeebling the sentence.

69. **censure** : opinion or judgement, whether approving or condemning.

58-80. The famous advice of Polonius to Laertes is too formal, precise, and studied to seem spontaneous. It is quite possible that the public of Shakespeare's day recognized the speech as being commonplace and conventional, and therefore in keeping with the character of the man who is to elicit from Hamlet the comment (*ii* 2 223) *these tedious old fools*.

81. **my blessing season this in thee**. That is, cause thee to take it to heart, as wholesome and serious advice earnestly meant, even though familiar and trite as a piece of moralizing.

83. **tend**, a common abbreviation for *attend*.

94. **as so 'tis put on me**. See *put* with *on* in the same sense, *As You Like It* i 2 99 ; *Twelfth Night* v 1 70.

102. **unsifted.** That is, who has had no experience in sifting; or, perhaps, who would not endure the test of a sifting in this dangerous matter. For the meaning of *sift* in this figurative sense, see Hamlet ii 2 58; All's Well v 3 124; Richard II. i 1 12; 1 Henry VI. iii 1 24.

107. **sterling.** Look up the etymology of this word.

108. **not to crack the wind of the poor phrase.** Whence comes the figure?

109. **you'll tender me a fool.** Read *me* as a dative: you'll tender to me a fool, or show me that I have a fool for a daughter.

115. Be sure of the pronunciation of *springe*.

125. **with a larger tether he may walk.** Whence comes the figure?

126. **in few.** Recall these words when, in a following scene, you find Polonius again professing that he will be brief.

127. **they are brokers.** Shakespeare regularly uses *broker* in the sense of go-between, with degrading implication. Look up the etymology of *broker*.

Scene 4.

1. **The air bites shrewdly.** See *bite* in this sense, As You Like It ii 1 8; and shrewd, applied again to the weather, same play, v 4 179.

2. **a nipping and an eager air.** See *eager* in a very different application, i 5 69. See also 2 Henry VI. ii 4 3.

8. **takes his rouse:** Compare i 2 127; ii 1 58.

9. **Keeps wassail, and the swaggering up-spring reels.** On *wassail* compare Macbeth i 7 64. Look up the origin of this word. The *up-spring* was a dance. *Reels* may here be a transitive verb. Then the expression means, — reels, or staggers, through the boisterous dance.

11. **The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out.** All the braying in Shakespeare is ascribed to drums and trumpets, or to minstrelsy. Recall Keats' *silver snarling trumpets* in St. Agnes' Eve.

15, 16. One of the most frequently quoted passages.

18. A very common usage of the preposition *of*.

20. **Soil our addition.** *Addition* is constantly employed in this sense. See Hamlet ii 1 47 ; Macbeth i 3 106 ; Lear i 1 138.

22. Johnson, as quoted by Furness, interprets, — “ The best and most valuable part of the praise that would otherwise be attributed to us.”

23. Hamlet goes on to extend his moralizing from national traits to individual peculiarities.

24. **mole** is here *blemish* in the most general sense.

27. **complexion**, which ordinarily means *temperament*, may here be equivalent to *idiosyncrasy*.

28. **Reason** is here conceived as a restraining influence : whence the figures, **pales and forts**.

30. **plausive manners** : pleasing, popular manners.

35. **in the general censure** : in the general estimate, or in the final public verdict.

36-38.

the dram of eale

Doth all the noble substance of a doubt

To his own scandal.

The passage can hardly be read with the familiar acceptations and usages of words ; yet its purport is obvious. You may read in Furness the multitude of attempts that have been made at emendation of the text or at elucidation of it as it stands. Perhaps the best way to deal with the passage is, provisionally, to follow Professor Corson, who allows the text to stand, and manages it thus : *Eale* is equivalent to *evil* or *ill*. The verb of the passage is *doth substance* ; *all the noble* — an adjective used as a noun — is the object of *doth substance*, and *of* has its common ancient meaning *with*. In this view of the passage, *substance* is a verb meaning *to infect* or *taint* ; and the sentence means, — the dram of evil doth taint all the noble (part of the character) with a doubt. Such an interpretation cannot of course be finally accepted until an undoubted instance of a verb *substance* — meaning something like *infect* — can be found in Elizabethan literature. In *to his own scandal* consider *his* as neuter, and referring to *all the noble*.

39. **Angels and ministers of grace** perhaps means, — Angels, and ye other heavenly powers.

40. A spirit of health is the antithesis to goblin damned, and hence means a spirit of salvation, or a spirit that is saved.

41, 42. Note the conditional subjunctives *bring* and *be*. Do not mistake these forms for imperatives.

43. questionable: affable, inviting question.

47. thy canonized bones. Canonize is always so accented in Shakespeare. Strictly, it means, received into the number of the saints. Here, however, it must mean, — buried with the due rites of the church.

48. cerements, with the same meaning as *cerecloth*, Merchant ii 7 51.

52. in complete steel. Complete is, in various passages, accented both ways.

54, 55. and we fools of nature

So horridly to shake our disposition.

You can easily improve the syntax: can you make the sentence clearer or more forcible?

71. That beetles o'er his base into the sea. The verb *beetle* Dr. Murray thinks Shakespeare coined. Before the poet's time there was only the adjective *beetle*, used to qualify the noun *brow*, or as a part of the compound *beetle-browed*. *Beetles into the sea* seems to us strange, but is quite clear.

73. which might deprive your sovereignty of reason. Clearly intended to bear the meaning, — which might deprive you of your sovereign power of reason.

83. The Néméan lion's nerve. Look up the story of Hercules.

85. I'll make a ghost of him that lets me. The vocable *let* belongs to two different verbs, distinct in origin, history, and meaning. Unlike in form and sound in Old English, they still remain unlike in the language of Chaucer, where they would not be confounded either to the ear or to the eye. All Chaucer readers know the two verbs and their dissimilar inflections. It is wholly wrong to say that "the verb *let*" sometimes has the unusual meaning to hinder. See *Twelfth Night* v 1 256; *Gentlemen* iii 1 113.

89. Have after. Compare the common phrase, *Have with you*,

as in *As You Like It* i 2 268. With his *have after* Horatio virtually repeats Marcellus' *Let's follow*.

Scene 5.

6. **I am bound to hear.** There are two participles having the same word-form, or vocable, *bound*. One of these was in middle English spelled *boun*, the *d* of the modern form being an excrescence. This word means, primarily, *prepared* or *ready*. See it in Chaucer's *Frankleyn's Tale*, 1503, —

As she was boun to goon the wey forth-right.

This is the word that appears, *Hamlet* iii 3 41; *Tempest* i 2, 235, and often elsewhere. When Hamlet says to the ghost, *I am bound to hear*, he seems to be using this word; but the ghost, in his reply, takes Hamlet's *bound* to mean *under obligation*. In this sense *bound* is the participle of the verb *bind*. The latter is of course the word used in the *Merchant* i 3 5; i 3 10, etc.

16. **harrow up thy soul.** An agricultural figure. Recall i 1 44, and see *Coriolanus* v 3 34.

17. **thy eyes, like stars, start from their spheres.** To understand the business of stars shooting from their spheres, you must acquaint yourself somewhat with the Ptolemaic astronomy, which was the astronomy of Shakespeare and all the Elizabethans. This you can best do by means of Masson's introduction to his *Globe Milton*. See *Dream* ii 1 153. The *spheres* long ago ceased to figure in our poetry; but the spheres and their music furnish one of the commonest motives to the poets of Shakespeare's and Milton's time.

19. **to stand an end.** The preposition anciently had the form *an* in familiar phrases before a vowel. It is now regularly *on* or *in* except when its prepositional force is forgotten: then it appears like, and is usually mistaken for, the article, as in the phrases *go a hunting*, *twice an hour*, *twice a year*.

21. **this eternal blazon:** this revelation of the secrets of eternity.

29. **Haste me to know't.** You must learn to entertain the Shakespearian syntax without taking offence at its strangeness.

32.

the fat weed

That roots itself in ease on Lethe wharf.

It is impossible to name any particular plant or weed that the poet could have had in mind. But consider the case of a plant growing on the bank of Lethe. One draught of this water caused the human soul to forget its past and to step out of the unrest of thought into the ease of oblivion. But here is a plant that drinks of Lethe all the time, and is permanently fixed and rooted in ease: all its life has been there: all its juices are Lethe water. It is the very symbol and type of dull forgetfulness. — The ghost may be conceived as having just come from the Lethe country, where he has noted the growth of the fat weed by the riverside.

37. a forged process of my death. See Merchant iv 1 274.

52. To those of mine: more lame syntax.

61. my secure hour. *Secure* is used in its most frequent Shakespearian sense. *Was* his hour, in our sense of the word, *secure*?

62. juice of cursed hebenon. It is possible to trace *hebenon* (perhaps *henbane*) through the literature of the period. See this done in Furness.

69. like eager droppings. Recall the instance you have already had of *eager* applied to the air, and see Sonnet 118; Richard II. v 3 75; 3 Henry VI. ii 6 68.

72. Look up the origin of *lazar*.

77. Three ecclesiastical terms, all referring to the same fact. Look them up in the dictionary.

85. Taint not thy mind: keep your motives pure, unmixed with thoughts of mere personal revenge.

92. In the intensity of his passion, Hamlet seeks the most impressive and solemn sanctions for the oath he is taking. But he rejects the thought of adding hell to heaven and earth as an object of invocation.

93-94. My heart and my sinews are vocative, and the verbs are proper imperatives.

97. In this distracted globe: meaning, probably, his head.

107. My tables, — meet it is I set it down. — The student's

habit. The contents of such *tables* are hinted in the foregoing lines, 98-101. Busy keepers of tables are apt to have weak memories, and a great resolution is not strengthened by being set down.

110-111.

Now to my word:

It is 'Adieu, Adieu, remember me.'

Thus he repeats the ghost's injunction as the consummation and completion of his oath. Now he can say, **I have sworn 't.**

124. **arrant** has an interesting origin.

147. **Upon my sword.** Among soldiers an oath taken with the hands upon the cross of a sword-hilt was peculiarly sacred.

163. **A worthy pioner:** that is, good at mining. See Henry V. iii 2 92. Look up the origin of *pioner*.

167. **Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.** Do not put the least shade of accent on *your*. Hamlet is never discourteous to Horatio. See Hamlet iv 3 22, 24; As You Like It v 4 63.

172. **antic:** odd, fantastic.

174. **with arms encumbered thus:** folded, — and he shows how he means, — as a sign that one bears an important secret. We can hardly understand what this posture of the arms could have been.

178. What must be the meaning here of the verb *note*?

Marcellus here drops out of the play, bearing an important part of Hamlet's secret. Henceforth dramatically non-existent, we may in thought couple him with Horatio as representing the great Danish public, that remains loyal to its young prince through all vicissitude, and could have been counted on in any honest attempt of Hamlet to carry out his resolution.

ACT II.

Scene 1.

7. **Inquire me first.** Read *me* as a dative, without accent.

8-9. Supply the omitted verbs.

10. **this encompassment.** No one knows what this means better than Polonius himself, and he defines it for us in line 65 below.

11. **more nearer.** A doubling of the comparative frequent in the plays. See Merchant iv 1 251; Tempest i 2 19.

24-26. These lines give specifications of *wild and usual slips*; whereas line 30 names an habitual vice of character.

36. **Wherefore should you do this?** Read this question as if it were introduced with the words, — Were you about to ask.

38. **a fetch of warrant:** a justifiable trick. *Fetch* as a noun is rare in Shakespeare. See Lear ii 4 90.

45. **He closes with you in this consequence:** he pursues the subject you have introduced, or follows out the cue you have given him, in this manner.

47. **addition,** as in i 4 20.

58. **o'ertook in 's rouse:** overcome by intoxication.

64. **We of wisdom and of reach.** The conceit of the old diplomatist. — Recall the instance you have just had, i 4 56, of *reach* as a noun.

68. **you have me.** So in All's Well iii 6 101.

71. **observe his inclination in yourself:** note whether he treats you with frankness and cordiality.

73. **Let him ply his music:** let him talk as much as he will.

78. **his doublet all unbraced.** We should say, his coat unbuttoned.

80. **his stockings . . . down-gyved to his ancle.** His stockings are so down about his ankles that they remind Ophelia of the fetters she has seen on the legs of criminals.

102. **This is the very ecstasy of love.** In considering whether Polonius is right, take into account Hamlet's words v 1 292.

103. **fordoes itself.** Compare v 1 244; Othello v 1 129; Dream v 1 381. Distinguish carefully between the *for*-verbs, — like *forgo*, *fordo*, *forget*, *forbear*, *forbid*, *forgive*, *forsake*; and the *fore*-verbs, — like *forecast*, *foretell*, *foresee*, *forerun*, *forestall*.

119. **More grief to hide than hate to utter love.** *To hide* and *to utter* are true gerunds, and would be translated into Latin by gerunds in the ablative case.

Scene 2.

2. **Moreover,** which by itself is an adverb, makes, in combination with *that*, a phrase which is a conjunction.

6. **Sith** is here a conjunction, meaning *since*. In line 12 the same word is an adverb, meaning *since that time*. We can use *since* now in both these ways. Look up the origin of *since*.

17. **whether** counts as a monosyllable in the verse.

22. **So much gentry and good will**. See *gentry* in a similar sense, v 2 114; so in *Lucrece*, 569.

67. **falsely borne in hand**: treacherously taken advantage of. Compare *Macbeth* iii 1 81. — **sends out arrests**. Modern syntax would require the repetition of the subject. The omission of a pronoun not required for clearness is very frequent in Shakespeare.

77-78. Remember this arrangement for a military passage of *Fortinbras* through *Denmark*.

80. **It likes us well**. The verb *like* originally meant to please, and was impersonal, as here. It is still always impersonal in the English of Chaucer. *In Shakespeare the two usages exist side by side. To-day we can no longer say, — *it likes us*.

81. **at our more considered time**: when we shall have had time to consider the matter more carefully.

86. to expostulate
What majesty should be.

By *expostulate* *Polonius* can only mean *expound* or *explain*.

111. **beautified** is a vile phrase. Do you not agree with *Polonius*?

123. **whilst this machine is to him**. * Only in this passage does Shakespeare use the word *machine*. See Wordsworth's poem, *She was a Phantom of Delight*.

126. **And more above**: still more than this. *Ophelia* has made to her father a detailed confession of *Hamlet's* love-making.

136. **If I had played the desk or table-book**. . . .

No, I went round to work.

Hamlet mourns that he cannot act: *Polonius* boasts that he can and does. No setting things down in tables for *Polonius*. May we imagine that *Polonius* has observed, and formed an opinion about, *Hamlet's* blank-books and his perpetual note-taking?

160. **He walks four hours together**. The numeral *four* seems to have been occasionally used with something of the same indefi-

niteness as our *three or four*, which, however, is itself very common in Shakespeare.

162. I'll loose my daughter to him. Remember that Ophelia is under strict injunction to lock herself from Hamlet's resort. The word *loose*, therefore, is perfectly relevant.

170. O give me leave: pardon me for interrupting you.

196. Between who? Hamlet feigns to understand Polonius as meaning a *matter in dispute*.

204. I hold it not honesty, etc., for yourself, sir, should be as old as I am: I shall one day be as old as you are, and have the same infirmities; and then I shall wish old age to be spoken of with respect.

269-272. There is no need of searching for logical coherence in a speech which ends with the speaker's assertion, — *I cannot reason*. But perhaps, though this be madness, there may be in it some such method as this: The condition of the beggar is nobody's dream, or ambition; therefore the beggar, not being a dream, is a reality, or a body. But the monarchs and heroes are the objects of dreams, and hence are unsubstantial. — In writing *outstretched heroes* the poet may have had in mind the recumbent figures of kings and nobles familiar to everybody in England.

274. No such matter: no indeed; you shall not perform for me the offices of servants. I will not sort you; I will not class you.

277. in the beaten way of friendship: to ask you the question usual and expected among friends.

282. my thanks are too dear a halfpenny: my thanks can avail you nothing. Do not understand the *a* as the article. It is the preposition *an*, meaning *at*.

293. That you must teach me. Put the accents on the pronouns.

305. prevent, as so often in our older literature, means to *forestall*, or *anticipate*. your secrecy to the king and queen moult no feather: your secrecy shall not be in the least violated.

313. fretted with golden fire. See *Cæsar* ii 1 104; *Cymbeline* ii 4 88.

317. how express! Dr. Murray defines *express*, as here used,

well framed or modelled, and characterizes this meaning as a "nonce-use." This passage is the only one he cites to illustrate *express* in this sense.

330. **We coted them.** Dr. Murray cites many cases of *cote* meaning to overtake and pass by. The word is obsolete.

335. **the humorous man :** the capricious, eccentric man.

337. **whose lungs are tickled o' the sere :** an expression which it is no longer possible to explain in detail. Evidently, however, it means, — who laugh on very slight provocation.

346. **I think their inhibition comes by the means of the late innovation.** *Their inhibition* may mean, — their loss of patronage resulting from their unsuccessful competition with the boys ; and the *late innovation* may refer to the "license which had been given on 30 Jan. 1603-4 to the Children of the Queen's Revels to play at the Blackfriar's Theater and other convenient places."

354. **an aery of children, little eyases.** The dictionary will give all needed help. The word *eyas* has a peculiarly interesting origin and history.

362. **how are they escoted?** Look up the expression *scot and lot*. Note that *scot* is what Skeat calls a "doublet" of *shot*.

367. **Exclaim against their own succession.** That is, they injure the business for adults, while they themselves are about to become adults.

369. **much to do.** The phrase is simply another form of *much ado*. The two prepositional infinitives have just the same construction ; but one of them has fully developed into a noun.

370. **to tarre them to controversy.** Compare K. John iv 1 117 ; Troilus i 3 392.

377. **Do the boys carry it away?** Recall the French expression, *l'emporter*.

384. **'Sblood.** You will find it interesting to make a collection of the various swearing-phrases of the plays. 'Sblood is a shortened *God's blood*, as *'swounds*, line 604, is from *God's wounds*.

388. **Your hands, come then, etc.** Hamlet bethinks himself that he has not given to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern a proper princely welcome, and that all the attendants must have noticed his cold demeanor towards these old friends. As he does not wish

to be seen greeting a company of players with more effusive cordiality than he does two gentlemen of the court, he takes pains, before the players enter, to rectify the situation by adding to his former welcome (line 228) certain details of ceremony to which all are accustomed.

390. **let me comply with you in this garb:** let me join with you in an interchange of those conventional forms of salutation which befit a prince meeting his friends.

396. **I am but mad north-north-west,** etc. The obscurity of the speech is probably due to our unfamiliarity with the practice of hawking. *To know a hawk from a handsaw* was a proverb, in which, possibly, *handsaw* is a corruption of *heronshaw*, or *hernshaw*, the name of a bird hunted by falconers.

406. **o' Monday morning: 't was so indeed.** The latter part of his speech Hamlet speaks aloud, to be heard by Polonius, and to mislead him as to the subject of his talk with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

410. **when Roscius was an actor in Rome.** Hamlet teases Polonius by being the first to mention *actor*.

412. **Buz, buz!** "said to have been a common exclamation of impatience or contempt when any one was telling a well known story." Dr. Murray.

414. **Then came each actor on his ass:** possibly quoted from a ballad.

419-421. Polonius cites Seneca as the type of tragedy, and Plautus as the type of comedy.—**For the law of writ and the liberty.** Of the many explanations of this passage, Collier's, as quoted by Furness, is the simplest: "the players were good whether at written productions or at extemporal plays."

422. **O Jephthah, judge of Israel.** See the story, Judges xi 29.

432. **Nay, that follows not.** Hamlet plays on the ambiguity of the word *follows*. The verses quoted by Hamlet are from a known ballad of the time. See Furness.

439. In what two senses may Hamlet call the players *his abridgements*?

446. **by the altitude of a chopine.** See an account of the

chopine, with illustrations, in Knight's note on this passage in his Pictorial Shakespeare. Or see the International Dictionary.

447. **Pray God, your voice, like a piece of uncurrent gold, be not cracked within the ring.** Remember that the words, — "my young lady and mistress," — are really addressed to a *boy*, who plays the part of the lady, and who will become disqualified for this function when his voice begins to change. Hamlet finds that the boy has grown. — *Cracked within the ring* is thus explained by Knight: "In coins of the 16th century the head of the sovereign is invariably contained within a circle, between which and the rim the legend is given. The test of currency in a coin was that it should not be cracked within the circle or ring. If the crack, to which the thin coins of that age were particularly liable, extended beyond the ring, the money was no longer considered good." See numerous representations of such coins in Vol. 3 of Knight's Popular History of England.

457. **'t was caviare to the general.** The phrase has become so thoroughly embedded in standard English speech that every dictionary is sure to explain it.

459. **cried in the top of mine:** had more authority than mine.

462. **no sallets in the lines to make the matter savory:** no high seasoning to recommend the lines to a vitiated taste.

466. **more handsome than fine:** more abounding in natural and simple beauties than in artificial ones.

472. Recall Merchant ii 7 41.

472-541. The verses which Hamlet and the player deliver are, of course, not drama at all, but epic, and, in respect both to manner and to matter, are in the strain of Virgil. There is much discussion as to whether Shakespeare inserted this Pyrrhus episode in mockery of a poetic style in vogue in his day, or really esteemed it as highly as he makes Hamlet praise it, line 459. This is one of the mysteries of the play. The taste of the present day does not approve such verse. But did the Elizabethan taste also reject poetry of this sort?

502. **as a painted tyrant.** Do not imagine that this refers to Pyrrhus being *total gules*. For the meaning of *painted*, see the Ancient Mariner 117-118.

505. *against some storm.* Recall i 1 158, where *against*, in similar sense, is used as a conjunction.

522. *he's for a jig* : he wants something comic.

595. *John-a-dreams* : a cant expression for an incapable, inefficient fellow, perhaps known to the comedy of the day.

ACT III.

Scene 1.

1. *drift of circumstance.* The king seems to mean very much what Polonius did, ii 1 10, by *encompassment and drift of question*.

2. In view of the meaning given by Shakespeare to the phrase, *put on*, it is by no means to be concluded that the king means to express the belief that Hamlet is *assuming* his confusion. Though we understand that Hamlet is feigning madness, we must not consider the king in possession of the secret. *Why he puts on this confusion* may mean simply, — what is the cause of the mental aberration that has befallen him.

8. *keeps aloof* : subject lacking, as in ii 2 67.

12. *with much forcing of his disposition* : much against his inclination.

13. *Niggard of question* ; but of our demands most free in his reply. These words cannot be understood except on the assumption that Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are purposely misrepresenting Hamlet's behavior towards themselves. What motive can you imagine them to have for such misrepresentation ?

31. *may here affront Ophelia* : the regular Shakespearian meaning of *affront*. See Wint. Tale v 1 75 ; Cymbeline iv 3 29.

47. *with devotion's visage*, etc. Polonius naturally assumes that in Ophelia the act of reading on a book is an act of devotion. Note the mingling of figures, with devotion's *visage* we do *sugar* o'er.

58. *slings and arrows* seem curiously chosen to typify the inflictions of adverse fortune.

59. *to take arms against a sea of troubles* must be generalized thus : to make resistance to a multitude of calamities.

65. *there's the rub*. See the noun *rub* in a similar sense, Henry V. v 2 33 ; Coriolanus iii 1 60 ; Macbeth iii 1 134.

67. When we have shuffled off this mortal coil. The figure regards the soul as entangled and ensnared by its connection with the body.

68. the respect: the consideration.

88. Soft you now! Evidently addressed to himself.

89. in thy orisons be all my sins remembered. In reading be careful as to where you put the accent.

114. this was sometime a paradox. Hamlet's dictum was not a paradox in the sense that it was self-contradictory, but in the sense that it contradicted general opinion.

120. we shall relish of it: that is, of our old stock.

132. Where's your father? At home, my lord. Hamlet, as we know, feigns his madness for a purpose: account for Ophelia's lying. Is it possible that Hamlet knew Polonius was present and overhearing his interview with Ophelia?

151. make your wantonness your ignorance. You excuse immodest words or deeds by pretending you knew no better.

159. The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword. Do the elements of the two triplets of which the line consists correspond, in order of collocation, with their obvious logical connection?

191. let her be round with him. As to meaning of *round*, compare Twelfth Night ii 3 102.

Scene 2.

2. trippingly on the tongue: with clean and distinct articulation, so as to be understood. We have no town-criers now, but street venders and street-car conductors keep us constantly aware what it means to *mouth* words.

We must not consider Hamlet as giving a general lesson in elocution, wholesome and widely applicable as we find his teaching to be. He is taking pains to secure that his dozen or sixteen lines be effectively spoken. But he would not be Hamlet did he not generalize and moralize on every possible occasion.

10. a periwig-pated fellow. It is known from other sources that the actors of Shakespeare's time wore wigs as a distinctive part of their costume. Wigs did not come into general use till the reign of Charles II.

15. whipped for o'erdoing Termagant; it out-herods Herod. *Termagant* is the name given, in the mediæval romances, to the god of the Saracens. The parts of Termagant and Herod, in the ancient moralities and mysteries, called for the most unrestrained ranting. The public of Shakespeare's time was still familiar with these characters and with the traditional way of acting them.

30. the censure of the which one: the censure of one of whom.

60. As e'er my conversation coped withal. See various meanings of *cope*, Merchant iv 1 412; As You Like It ii 1 67; Lear v 3 124.

63. That no revenue hast. Accent *revenue* as in Tempest i 2 98.

65. let the candied tongue lick absurd pomp. Compare, as to accent, the *absurd* of this passage with that in i 2 103. As to *pregnant*, compare ii 2 212; ii 2 595; Meas. for Meas. iv 4 23. — Note the curious mixture of metaphors, — let the tongue lick — and crook the hinges of the knee. The poet forgets that he has said *tongue*, and thinks only of the sweet-tongued flatterer.

78. my heart's core. Consider the etymology of *core*.

81. the circumstance which I have told thee. Did we know already of this disclosure to Horatio? Refer to Horatio's last appearance. Have we heard of him since that time?

83. when thou seest that act afoot. A frequent meaning of *afoot*. See Cæsar iii 2 265.

89. Vulcan's stithy. See Troi. and Cres. iv 5 255, where *stithy* is a verb.

92. In censure of his seeming. *Censure* means here discussion, or consideration.

98. of the chameleon's dish: I eat the air. See the interesting article on the *chameleon* in the Encyclopædia Britannica.

119. Shall I lie in your lap? Steevens, quoted by Furness, says, — "To lie at the feet of a mistress, during any dramatic representation, seems to have been a common act of gallantry."

132. your only jig-maker. Evidently we must understand the phrase to mean *only your jig-maker*.

137. then let the devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of sables. A difficult passage. The commentators try, by all sorts of devices,

to make out that the *black*, which Hamlet lets the devil wear, is true mourning, while a *suit of sables* is a festive garb. Then Hamlet means, — let the devil continue in black, for I will go out of mourning at once.

142. **else shall he suffer not thinking on, with the hobby-horse, etc.** See the hobby-horse described in Scott's *Abbot*, Chap. xiv and note 9; and illustrated in Knight's *History of England*, ii 255; iii 253. In Shakespeare's time the hobby-horse was going, or had gone, out of fashion. Hamlet quotes from a ballad which laments that the hobby-horse is forgotten.

Stage direction, **Hautboys play. The dumb-show enters.** This dumb-show exhibits to us, in mute representation, precisely the same action that we are about to see again with the accompaniment of language. That such procedure was not usual in the English theatre is shown by Ophelia's question, — What means this, my lord? It would seem to be Hamlet's purpose to make absolutely sure, by the double presentation, that the scene he is about to have enacted shall be seen and felt by the king in its full significance.

147. **muching mallecho.** The verb *much* or *meach*, meaning to *skulk*, *sneak*, or *lie hid*, you will find as an English word in the *International Dictionary*. *Mallecho* is Spanish, meaning *evil deed* or *crime*. The two words, coupled by the alliteration, may have constituted a stock expression in the poet's time.

162. **the posy of a ring.** Arber, in his *English Garner*, gives interesting collections of love-posies from Tudor times.

159–276. The play within the play runs on, interrupted with comment by the audience, till the king rises. Shakespeare scholars have tried to settle what lines of this inner play are the *dozen or sixteen* that Hamlet was to set down and insert in 't. The inquiry is of course futile: no such lines exist. The poet had no occasion to write certain verses with a difference in order that critics in the future might please themselves with saying, — these lines are Hamlet's. It was for a dramatic purpose that he invented Hamlet's request to be allowed to insert in the play his dozen or sixteen lines. What this purpose was is perfectly obvious. The play is to be made to appear as one that the actors have

already in their repertory and can present off-hand. But such a play cannot be conceived as suiting Hamlet's purpose until it has undergone alterations. Even an Elizabethan audience would have been skeptical about the previous existence of a play having just this plot. It is as absurd to look for Hamlet's lines as to search for the *Mouse-trap* in Italian literature. — See Furness' Variorum note, but especially that part of it which is Mr. Furness' own.

173. woe is me. *Me*, of course, is dative.

175. I distrust you: I am anxious about you.

177. holds quantity: are directly proportional.

184. My operant powers their functions leave to do: my vital forces are decaying.

202. Most necessary 't is: most inevitable, most sure.

229. An anchor's cheer. The usual form, *anchorite*, does not occur in the plays, and this word *anchor* only in this instance.

230. Each opposite that blanks the face of joy. Shakespeare's only use of the verb *blank*.

247. Marry, how? Be sure to give this question the due inflection.

251. Your majesty and we that have free souls, it touches us not. Just such an anomaly of syntax as we had i 4 54.

255. You are as good as a chorus, my lord. Remember how, in certain of Shakespeare's plays, as in *Henry V.* and *Pericles*, a chorus is employed to forward the movement of the plot by acquainting us with events that cannot be brought within the action.

256. I could interpret . . . if I could see the puppets dallying. Says Steevens, — "An interpreter formerly sat on the stage at all *motions*, or puppet-shows, and interpreted to the audience." See *Two Gentlemen* ii 1 101.

264. The croaking raven doth bellow for revenge. Evidently a reminiscence of a passage in *The True Tragedie of Richard III.*, a play of uncertain authorship, the precursor of Shakespeare's *Richard III.* This early play you will find in Hazlitt's *Shakespeare's Library*, Part II, Vol. I, page 43. By all means look it up if you possibly can, and read at least the king's speech, p. 117.

282-285. Probably a stanza of a ballad.

288. **Provincial**, as applied to roses, can no longer be understood. As to the meaning of *razed*, with shoes, commentators dispute whether it means *slashed*, *striped*, or, by misspelling, *raised*.

289. **a fellowship in a cry of players**. From being used as a term of hunting, to mean a pack of hounds, as in *Dream* iv 1 128; *Coriolanus* iii 3 120; *Othello* ii 3 370, *cry* came to mean a company in general, as here.

291. **A whole one, I**. *I* may here stand for *ay*, the interjection, or it may be the pronoun, with ellipsis of construction.

295. **A very, very — pajock**. The rime which Horatio says Hamlet might have made is obvious enough.

305. **Why then, belike, he likes it not, perdy**. It may be Hamlet cuts short what he was going to say because Rosencrantz and Guildenstern now enter.

348. **by these pickers and stealers**. The oath *by this hand* is common enough, as in *Tempest* iii 2 56, 78; *Meas. for Meas.* ii 1 172; *Much Ado* iv 1 327; *Merchant* v 1 161; and *by these pickers and stealers* means the same thing.

358. **'While the grass grows.'** The entire proverb has been preserved, — while grass doth growe, the silly horse he starves.

360. **O, the recorders! let me see one**. The recorder was an instrument of the flute family, but blown, not like the modern flute, or fife, but like the flageolet.

361. **go about to recover the wind of me**. Hamlet is now speaking privately with Guildenstern, whom he charges with hunting him, and trying, with the craft of a hunter, to drive him into a net.

363. In Guildenstern's speech consider what word is to bear the main accent.

388. **though you can fret me**. Note the double meaning of *fret*.

401. **They fool me to the top of my bent**. On the word *bent* in this sense Dr. Murray says, — "Extent to which a bow may be bent or a spring wound up, degree of tension; hence degree of endurance, capacity for taking in or receiving; limit of capacity, etc. Now only in the Shakespearian phrase, To the top of one's bent, or the like."

410. **Soft! now to my mother**. With the exclamation *soft*

Hamlet checks the bitter passion of his soul, and passes to a consideration of the bearing he is to assume towards his mother.

416. The participle *shent* is the only part of the verb *shend* that appears in the plays. See Troi. and Cres. ii 3 86; Coriolanus v 2 104.

Scene 3.

1. I like him not. Do not take the expression in the modern sense.

2. prepare you. *You* is object, the verb being reflexive.

15. The cease of majesty dies not alone. The poet, after writing *the cease of majesty*, continued his sentence as if he had begun with, — *deceasing majesty*, or *a dying king*.

16. like a gulf, doth draw. The conception of a *gulf* as sucking or engulting is frequent in the plays. See Henry V. ii 4 10; iv 3 82.

20-22. which . . . ruin. Note the anacoluthon. The Latin can say, — *quæ cum cadit*. Why cannot the modern languages do the same thing?

24. Arm you, like *prepare you* in line 2. Both the noun and the verb *arm* are often used without reference to weapons of warfare. Remember Antonio's *I am armed to suffer*, Merchant iv 1 11.

29. To hear the process: to hear what goes on.

she'll tax him home: she will be peremptory and insistent in her demand for explanations.

33. of vantage: from a secret and unsuspected post of observation.

48-51. Compare as to metric value the word *prayer* in line 48 with the same word in line 51.

61. the action lies in his true nature. See in the dictionary the meaning of *lie* as a law term.

64. what rests: what remains.

68. O limed soul. See 2 Henry VI. i 3 91; iii 3 16; and Comus 646.

73. Now might I do it pat. See Lear i 2 146.

75. That would be scanned: that requires consideration.

81. with all his crimes broad blown. This is the same participle *blown* that we had in iii 1 167, and which you will see in

Much Ado iv 1 59; L. L. Lost v 2 297. It is a different word that you find in the *blown* of Macbeth ii 3 60; Lear iv 1 8.

88. *know thou a more horrid hent*. From the verb *hent* the poet makes the noun *hent* for this one occasion. See Meas. for Meas. iv 6 14; Wint. Tale iv 3 133.

Scene 4.

4. *I'll sconeç me*. Elsewhere, in the modern form, *ensconce*. See Wives iii 3 96.

14. *No, by the rood*. *Rood* is purely English in its source and development, whereas *cross* is of Latin origin.

18. In *sit you down* the *you* is the nominative, usually not expressed with the imperative. In line 19, in *I set you up*, the *you* is dative.

40. *Such an act that blurs*. So Cæsar i 3 116; Wint. Tale, i 2 263. Note that in line 45 below we find the usual construction.

46. *the body of contraction*: the formal observance of the marriage contract.

49. *this solidity and compound mass*. Accent as if the words were preceded by *even*: *heaven's face doth glow of course*; but *even*. . . . Show how the descriptive phrase in line 49 expresses the thought more forcibly than the single word would have done.

50. *as against the doom*: as if looking forward to the speedy coming of the last judgement.

51. what act

That roars so loud, and thunders in the index?

Hamlet has thus far given only the headings or outlines of what he has to say. On *index* see Richard III. ii 2 149; iv 4 85; Troilus i 3 343; Othello ii 1 263.

56. *Hyperion's curls*. See note on i 2 140.

74. *ecstasy*, as generally in Shakespeare, meaning a certain degree of mental unsoundness.

77. *at hoodman-blind*: at blindman's-buff.

90. *grained spots*. Look up the etymology of *grain* as a color-word. It is an interesting history, as given by Marsh in his Lectures on the English language, reproduced by Furness.

98. a vice of kings. The *Vice* in the old plays was a buffoon character who played low, villanous parts. A *vice of kings* means a king who is a rascal.

Enter Ghost. Look forward to line 135. Compare this appearance of the ghost with that in Act I.

114. **Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works.** The frailest natures are most under the sway of mental impressions.

121. The word *excrement* in Shakespeare almost always means *hair*.

126. preaching to stones,
 Would make them capable.

See *capable*, similarly used, without complement, Richard III. iii 1 155.

128. you convert my stern effects: you break down my firm resolution.

130. Will want true color. Compare All's Well ii 5 64; 2 Henry VI. iii 1 236. Express the sense of these words in modern phrase.

149. Infects, a transitive verb with regimen understood.

152-155. The last lines of Hamlet's speech, from *Forgive me this* to the end, would be more fittingly spoken as an aside, addressed to *my virtue*. It has been proposed, accordingly, to insert the direction *aside* after *ranker*, and to put a comma after *this*. Such a change makes the lines more intelligible.

155. **curb and woo.** Apparently the only instance in the plays of *curb* used intransitively.

161-165. There is no difficulty in surmising with confidence the drift of the passage, though it defies grammatical analysis.—While custom dulls our souls to the turpitude of base actions often performed, it also, on the other hand, establishes us in wholesome courses, and makes easy the practice of virtue. In one aspect custom is a monster and a devil: in another aspect custom is an angel.

175. **their scourge and minister.** Heaven is evidently, on this occasion, conceived as a plural noun.

180. The initial light syllable of the pentameter verse is rarely

dropped. A better way of scanning this line is doubtless to make two syllables of *word*. Abbott, Shakespearian Grammar, 485, shows several instances where monosyllables whose vowel is followed by *r* have to be thus dealt with.

190. On the strange words of the line consult the dictionary.

193. **Unpeg the basket**, etc. The allusions would be pointless unless they referred to a well-known story. But the story is no longer known at all.

200. **I must to England: you know that?** How may we imagine that Hamlet knew of the king's resolution to send him to England. Compare iv 3 48. Note also how well informed he is of the plot against his life, and how confident he is that he can circumvent the plotters. Has the play prepared us to expect in Hamlet such subtlety?

202. **There's letters sealed.** Abbott, Shak. Gram. 335, cites many instances of verbs in the singular preceding plural subjects.

207. *Hoist* is a contraction of *hoisted*. Verbs ending in *t* or *d* are liable to this contraction. So we find *bloat*, iii 4 182; *deject*, iii 1 163; and in other plays the participles *addict*, *graft*, *heat*, *infect*, *quit*, *taint*, *wed*, *waft*, *wet*, etc.

211. **shall set me packing.** A common meaning of *pack*, in some parts of America, still is to *carry a load*; whence the compound, *pack-animal*. — Staunton, as quoted by Furness, adduces from the plays of Shakespeare many instances in which actors carry dead bodies from the stage, and accounts for the practice by referring to the poverty of the theatres, which could not afford assistants and supernumeraries for such purposes.

ACT IV.

Scene 1.

10. **whips out . . . cries . . . kills.** The subject is omitted in the animated discourse.

11. **in this brainish apprehension:** in the delusion caused by the disease of his mind.

13. Do we find the subjunctive thus used in modern English?

26. **a mineral of metals base.** A *mineral* is a *mine*. Precious metals are always found associated with base ones.

Scene 2.

11. That I can keep your counsel and not mine own. Refer to ii 2 303.

12. to be demanded of a sponge : to be questioned by a sponge.

19. like an ape doth nuts. This use of *like* as a conjunction, now so carefully avoided by good writers, is rare in Shakespeare. See *Pericles* ii 4 36.

29. The body is with the king, etc. If these words are to be understood as making up a riddle, the riddle is too tough for modern wit.

32. Hide fox and all after. Perhaps the name of a children's game, — our *hide-and-seek*. All after, i.e. all in pursuit.

Scene 3.

21. a certain convocation of politic worms are e'en at him. — With obvious allusion to Polonius as a statesman and politician.

45. prepare thyself. Portia says to Shylock, *prepare thee* to cut off the flesh ; Shylock says to Antonio, *Come, prepare*. Discuss the development of usage as regards the verb *prepare*.

61. As my great power thereof may give thee sense : as thou hast learned by experience my power to enforce my demands.

Scene 4.

6. in his eye : in his presence, before his face.

17. Make the pause count as a light syllable.

24. Read with omission of initial light syllable.

25. It will require armies of more than two thousand men, and an expenditure of more than twenty thousand ducats, to settle this question.

53.

Rightly to be great

Is not to stir without great argument.

Consider well whether to read with pause after *Is* or after *not*. The two ways of reading result in very different meanings. Only one of these ways of pausing gives to the *But* in line 55 its true value, and this consideration settles the place of the pause in 54.

64. continent, a containing, or enclosing, space.

Scene 5.

3. *will needs be pitied.* Compare *will needs be* with *thou wilt needs marry*, iii 1 143.

6. *spurns enviously at straws.* Note the meaning of *envy* in Merchant iv 1 10, 126; and of *envious*, Hamlet iv 7 174.

19. Guilt is so preoccupied with suspicion that it forgets to be on its guard against betraying itself.

Re-enter Horatio, with Ophelia. The stage direction of the first quarto here is, — Enter Ophelia playing on a lute, and her hair down, singing.

25. *cockle hat and staff.* Both were badges of pilgrims. See illustration in Knight's Shakespeare.

26. *his sandal shoon.* Recall the *clouted shoon*, Comus 635.

37. *larded.* Compare v 2 20.

41. *God 'ild you.* Usually in this contracted form, as in Macbeth i 6 13, but in full form, Ant. and Cle. iv 2 33. In these formulas the verb *yield* means to *requite*. Chaucer uses the same form, — god yelde yow, Cant. Tales D 1772.

They say the owl was a baker's daughter. Douce, quoted by Furness, relates, as a common story among the vulgar in Gloucestershire, the following: "Our Saviour went into a baker's shop, where they were baking, and asked for some bread to eat. The mistress immediately put a piece of dough into the oven to bake for him, but was reprimanded by her daughter, who, insisting that the piece of dough was too large, reduced it to a very small size. The dough, however, began to swell, and presently became of a most enormous size. Whereupon the baker's daughter cried out, 'Heugh, heugh,' which owl-like noise induced our Saviour to transform her into that bird."

69. *I cannot choose but weep.* We have lost the phrase *cannot choose but*, and now say, *I cannot help* (with gerund), or *I can but*, or *cannot but* (with infinitive). See Tempest i 2 186; ii 2 24.

In the verses that Ophelia sings occurs the line,

Which bewept to the grave did go.

We are to remember that Ophelia sings snatches of old tunes that dwell vaguely in her memory. Her *bewept*, literally incorrect as

it is, portrays her pitiful mental state, just as the words of Laertes, 213-216, exhibit to us his fierce anger.

81. **the people muddled, Thick and unwholesome.** See *Shrew* v 2 143; *Wint. Tale* i 2 325.

84. **in hugger-mugger.** See dictionary.

90. **wants not:** has an abundance of.

93. **Will nothing stick our person to arraign.** See *stick* in the same sense, 2 *Henry IV.* i 2 26; *Henry VIII.* ii 2 127.

97. **Switzers** had come to be a general term for mercenary soldiers.

99. **overpeering,** as in *Merchant* i 1 12.

105. **The ratifiers and props of every word.** *Word* must be used here in a very general sense, meaning, not merely *rule, law, decree*, but also *course of action*.

110. **this is counter.** You are running in the direction contrary to the right one.

146. Investigate, in encyclopædia or text-book of zoölogy, the correctness of the allusion to the *pelican*.

161. **Nature is fine in love.** The language is obscure. A suggestion of the meaning of *fine* you may get from *Troi.* and *Cres.* iii 2 24; iv 4 3; whence you may infer the sense of the word to be, — acutely susceptible of emotion, — wholly subject to the despotism of the feelings.

162. **It sends some precious instances of itself:** it parts even with its mental sanity.

170, 171. Ophelia's verses seem to constitute an assignment of parts for the singing of the refrain of the ballad she has begun in lines 164-166. Thus in 170, 171 we must accent the pronouns.

172, 173. The allusions to *the wheel* and to *the false steward that stole his master's daughter* can no longer be understood.

175-180. The symbolical meanings which Ophelia assigns to the flowers she distributes belonged to the poetry of the time, and can in some instances be elsewhere exemplified. The rosemary and the pansies she gives to Laertes; the fennel and the columbines to the king; the rue, and perhaps the daisy, to the queen. According to a contemporary poem, the *fennel* was emblematic of flattery. The *columbine* had an ill repute. Chapman speaks of it as "that

thankless flower." *Rue*, the name of the flower, is not akin to *rue*, meaning sorrow, or to *ruth*, meaning pity. But the poet connects, in his thought, the flower-name, *rue*, and the common noun, *ruth*. What Ophelia means by giving some rue to the queen, to whom she says *she must wear hers with a difference*, and keeping some of it for herself, is thus explained by Skeat: "It is as if Ophelia said, 'I offer you rue, which has two meanings; it is sometimes called *herb of grace*, and in that sense I take some for myself; but with a slight difference of spelling it means *ruth*, and in that respect it will do for you.'" "The explanation is not mine," says Professor Skeat, "it is Shakespeare's own." See *Richard II.* iii 4 105-106. By Chaucer the *daisy* is glorified as empress of flowers, — as the flower of all flowers. What Shakespeare would make it symbolize in the hands of Ophelia is not clear. The *violet* stood for faithfulness in love. May it be that Ophelia named the daisy and the violets with Horatio in view?

178. **A document in madness**: a lesson in wisdom by a witless person.

188. **Thought**. The word is used sometimes thus, to mean *sad* thought or melancholy. See *Cæsar* ii 1 187; *Antony* iv 6 35.

204. Rectify the syntax.

216. What is the logical subject of *cry*?

Scene 6.

26. **too light for the bore of the matter**. The figure is borrowed from the technic of firearms.

The adventure recounted in the letter to Horatio, considered in connection with Hamlet's confidence that he should succeed in thwarting the king's plot against his life, iii 4 202-210, suggests that the pirate had been duly arranged for by Hamlet himself. Note particularly the words of the letter concerning the pirates, "they knew what they did." As an accident, the adventure at sea comes too pat in fulfilment of prophecy. That the poet, however, conceived it as an accident becomes clear from Hamlet's story to Horatio v 2. Much as we might like to attribute so important an event to the foresight and action of the persons of the drama, nothing seems left for us but to ascribe it to chance.

Scene 7.

13. **be it either which.** No other instance of this phrase form is found in the plays. Understand it, whichever of the two it be.

21. **Would convert his gyves to graces:** would regard him as being ennobled and glorified by the very tokens that marked him as a malefactor. The tangle of figures in 19-24 need occasion no difficulty. The passage is quite Shakespearian, and perfectly clear.

28. **stood challenger on mount of all the age.** Read as if the words *challenger on mount* were hyphenated together so as to form a single idea. Ophelia's worth, standing on mount in the lists (see *Ivanhoe*) challenged all the age.

59. **As how should it be so? how otherwise?** Spoken very deliberately, with long pauses. The speaker is studying the mystery.

63. **as checking at his voyage.** For the source and meaning of the figure, see *Twelfth Night* ii 5 125; iii 1 71.

77. **of the unworthiest siege.** On the meaning of *siege*, see *Othello* i 2 22. Unworthiest, having the least *worth* or value.

82. **Importing health and graveness:** the one (the careless livery) importing health, and the other (the sables and weeds) importing graveness.

85. **they can well on horseback.** *Can* was not always a mere auxiliary. Chaucer says, — I can a noble tale; and Coverdale, — such as can but English. See *Hamlet* v 2 331; *Lear* iv 4 8.

86. **had witchcraft in it:** i.e. in his equestrian skill.

90, 91. The contrasted words are *forgery* and *did*.

104. **Did Hamlet so envenom with his envy.** That is, not with envy of him, but with the envy which his report excited in young men.

109. **The painting of a sorrow.** Just as in ii 2 502.

112. **love is begun by time.** Love does not spring up till after some term of association.

113. **in passages of proof.** In cases where love has been brought to the test of time.

117. **at a like goodness still.** See ii. 2 42.

118. **goodness, growing to a plurisy.** Furness' note on

plurisy is lucid and conclusive: "The early dramatists were misled by the sound into supposing that pleurisy was the same as plethory, and they accordingly spelled it 'plurisy,' to indicate the symptoms implied in its supposed derivation from *plus*."

119-122. Compare the king's moralizing with Hamlet's, iv 3 39-45, and with that of Polonius, ii 2 136-139.

123. a spendthrift sigh, That hurts by easing. The sigh is called *spendthrift* because, according to old medical notions, it wastes the vital powers and does no good. With the disease properly named *pleurisy*, the sigh that hurts by easing seems peculiarly congruous.

128, 129. with these words compare Hamlet's scruples, iii 3 75-95.

139. a sword unbated: a sword not blunted by means of the button on the point always used to render harmless the foils of friendly scrimers.

in a pass of practice: in a thrust which you will have specially practised.

152. And that our drift: and if our drift.

155. blast in proof: fail in the trial.

156. your cunnings. *Cunning* is the verbal substantive of *can*. As we speak of a person's *doings*, meaning the things he *does*, so we may speak of his *cunnings*, meaning the things he *can*.

160. and that he calls: and when he calls.

173-175. her coronet weeds . . . her weedy trophies. There are two distinct words *weed*. Consider if the two words are mingled in this passage for the sake of word-play. Does the poet here, for a tricky word, defy the matter?

179. incapable of her own distress: not comprehending—perhaps not conscious of—her own distress.

190. The woman will be out: the womanish weakness in me will be over.

ACT V.

Scene 1.

4. straight: straightway, as in ii 2 451.

crowner: coroner, in the clownish dialect.

9. *Se offendendo*, Clown's Latin for *se defendendo*, in self-defence.

12. *an act hath three branches*, etc. Legal phraseology filtered through the clown's wit.

13. *argal*, clownish for *ergo*.

14. *goodman*. Accent the first syllable.

24. *quest*, for *inquest*, — jury. See Sonnet xlv.

27. *a gentlewoman*. Recollect that the epithet *gentle* always signifies a distinction of social rank.

32. *even Christian*. *Even* is prefixed to nouns, with the sense *fellow*, or Latin *co-*. Thus *even knight* translates Latin *commilito*: and so we have *even servant*, *even disciple*.

33. *There is no ancient gentlemen*. See note on iii 4 202.

42. *could he dig without arms?* The usual verbal quibbling.

57, 58. Be careful to read in the right tone.

59. *tell me that and unyoke*: tell me that and you may unyoke the cattle of your wit and turn them out to pasture, as having done a good day's work.

67. *Go, get thee to Yaughan*. All we can be sure of is that to Yaughan, — person or place, — the clown sent his man for liquor.

68. *a stoup of liquor*. See next scene, 278.

He digs and sings. The verses sung by the clown are taken, with alteration, from a poem by Lord Vaux, entitled *The aged lover renounceth love*, which you may read in Arber's edition of Tottel's Miscellany, or in Furness. By all means look up this poem. It is worth the trouble of a little search, both for its own sake and as accounting for some things in Shakespeare.

71. The *oh* and the *ah* that interrupt the clown's song mark the effect upon his voice of his heavy strokes with the pick.

75. *a property of easiness*: a matter of indifference.

79–82. This stanza is made up out of two of the original, viz. —

For age with steyling steppes
 Hath clawed me with his crowch,
 And lusty life away she leapes
 As there had been none such.

.

For beauty with her bande
 These croked cares hath wrought,
 And shipped me into the lande
 From whence I first was brought.

84. jowls: throws down carelessly.

97. chapless. The noun drops its *s* before the suffix.
 mazzard, or mazard, — contemptuous for *head*.

100. loggats a game in which small conical logs of wood were rolled at a mark.

103. For and. The original has, — *and eke*, — with just the same meaning.

106–121. Hamlet's speech over the skull of the lawyer is full of technical law terms, to study which in minute detail would be to begin the study of the law. The passage is one of many that prove the poet to have possessed an astonishing facility in the use of legal phraseology.

110. sconce, like *mazzard*, 97, and *pate*, 116, is a vulgar word for *head*.

115, 116. the fine of his fines, . . . to have his fine pate full of fine dirt. Here is the word *fine*, forming two nouns of dissimilar meanings, and two adjectives also wholly unlike in sense. Yet the word is but one, and all its developments belong to the same history. The first *fine* of the passage means *end*; and the second is the name of a legal process. The two adjectives have obvious meanings. — So in the expression, — the recovery of his recoveries, the first *recovery* is the common word, the second a technical term.

120. this box must mean *this grave*, with reference to the boxes in which lawyers kept their papers.

125. which seek out assurance in that: who strive by such means to make the ownership of property sure and lasting.

131–133. thou liest . . . you lie. Note the varying form of address. What principle can you perceive in the matter?

149. we must speak by the card. The figure comes from the mariner's compass. Dr. Murray quotes (1636), — Let us carefully steere by the card of God's word. — Recall Burns, — Unskilful he to note the card of prudent lore.

151. the age is grown so picked: so affected, so precise, so smartly critical.

153. he galls his kibe. See *Tempest* ii 1 276; *Lear* i 5 9.

176. I have been sexton here, man and boy, thirty years. At this point we inevitably put two data of time together, and infer that we know Hamlet's age. It is confusing, however, to compare with this the other indications of Hamlet's age which the play affords. Let us say that 't were to consider too curiously to assign to him any certain and conclusive age at all. It was not the poet's purpose to be consistent after the manner of a biography or a chronicle. Hamlet sometimes appears young, — but freshly out of his teens. Sometimes he acts and speaks with more maturity than such an age implies. In no scene does a reasonable consistency require us to give him so many years as thirty. In our thought we always make Hamlet young enough and old enough for the need of the moment. His age is not a fixed datum, with which his words and deeds must consist. — We must dispose of the grave-digger as a witness by simply remarking that in the circumstances his reference to the birth of young Hamlet creates for an audience a moment of intensest interest. It was to this end that the poet let the grave-digger talk.

189–215. The Yorick passage also, chronologically consistent as it is with the grave-digger's account of his term of service, must be understood as having been inserted for quite other purposes than chronological ones. An audience in the theatre, surrendering to the pathos of the Yorick scene, does not stop to calculate.

255. crants: a garland.

256. her maiden strewments. See *Cymbeline* iv 2 285, and line 269, this scene.

the bringing home of bell and burial. See illustration of these words, *Rom. and Jul.* iv 5 84–90.

284. splenitive. Compare *Cæsar* iv 3 47; 1 *Hen.* IV. v 2 19; *Hen.* VIII. iii 2 99.

298. woo't does not stand for *wouldst thou*, but is an unmistakable present, equivalent to *wilt thou*.

299. eisel is a good English word for *vinegar*. Shakespeare scholars have been usually quite unwilling to let it remain vinegar,

and have proposed all sorts of other meanings and readings. In Matthew xxvii 48, Wycliffe's version has:—oon of hem fillide a spounge with aycel.

314, 315. **Let Hercules himself, etc.** Into whatever new dangers he finds that he has run, he will not fail to assert his cause.

320. **This grave shall have a living monument.** This is probably spoken to Laertes alone, and hints the impending sacrifice of Hamlet's life.

Scene 2.

6. **worse than the mutines in the bilboes:** worse than mutineers fettered with the peculiarly painful irons named bilboes.

22. **such bugs and goblins in my life:** such awful consequences to follow if I remained alive. See Shrew i 2 211; 3 Henry VI. v 2 2; Wint. Tale iii 2 93.

23. **on the supervise:** at sight.

33. **our statists.** See Wordsworth's A Poet's Epitaph.

36. **it did me yeoman's service.** Illustrate the meaning of *yeoman* from 1 Henry IV. iv 2 16; Henry V. iii 1 25.

42. **And stand a comma 'tween their amities.** We now use the *comma* to separate, according to the sense of its origin; but to Shakespeare the comma was evidently a symbol of connection.

61. The figure is taken from men confronting each other in deadly encounter with swords.

63. **Does it not, thinks't thee, stand me now upon:** is it not now incumbent upon me.—In *thinks't thee* we have all the elements of the impersonal verb-phrase. In the common *methinks*, the formal subject is lacking.

79. **the bravery of his grief:** the loud and extravagant vaunting of his grief, in Scene 1.

89. **'t is a chough.** We naturally think of *chough* here in the same sense as in Tempest ii 1 266, and find the pertinency of its application to Osric to consist in the ability of the bird to chatter. It may be, however, we are to spell the word *chuff*, and understand it as having the same meaning as in 1 Henry IV. ii 2 94.

102. **complexion:** temperament, disposition. See Hamlet i 4 27; Merchant iii 1 32.

112. most excellent differences. Perhaps this is the Osric-Euphuistic way of saying, — all the different sorts of excellence.

Of very soft society and great showing : of perfect breeding and most elegant manners.

113. to speak feelingly of him : to put my heart into the task of setting him forth.

114. you shall find in him the continent of what part a gentleman would see. You shall find him to be a perfect collection of models of gentlemanly accomplishments.

120. yet but yaw neither in respect of his quick sail. Laertes plies his sails so deftly, and holds his course over the sea of deportment with such absolute exactness, that any small craft of description that attempts to follow him can but yaw.

131. Is't not possible to understand in another tongue? Horatio taunts Osric with not understanding his own sort of language when another man speaks it.

148. in the imputation laid on him by them. The *them* must refer to the people at the court, whom Osric has heard talking about Laertes.

149. in his meed. In his meed of praise. He gets more praise than anybody else.

155. he has imposed : he has "put up."

162. I knew you must be edified by the margent ere you had done : I knew you would have to consult the notes.

170. the French bet against the Danish. In view of Osric's further exposition of the business in his next speech, we have to conclude that the king's Barbary horses are to go to Laertes if he makes twelve hits before Hamlet makes nine ; but that Hamlet, to get the French swords, has only to make nine hits before Laertes makes twelve.

190. Yours, yours. Hamlet's curt recognition of Osric's *I commend*, etc.

193. This lapwing runs away : a forward, conceited fellow.

195. He did comply with : he made compliments to.

198. got the tune of the time and outward habit of encounter. Have learned fine speech enough to be able to talk superficially in the fashionable style.

200. *yesty* : frothy.

203. *commended him* : commended himself.

214. *In happy time*. The phrase expresses courteous recognition of the message just brought him by the lord, and willing acquiescence in the arrangements on foot.

226. *gain-giving* : misgiving. The word *gain-giving* is found in Middle-English texts, apparently always in the simple meaning, a giving back.

235. *since no man has aught of what he leaves, what is't to leave betimes?* Unless we understand an object with the second verb — *to leave* — this is the one instance in Shakespeare of the verb *leave* used intransitively. Comment on present usage.

266. *I'll be your foil, Laertes*. Hamlet plays on the other meaning of *foil*. See Richard III. v. 3 250 ; Tempest iii 1 46.

267. *your skill shall . . . stick fiery off indeed* : shall stand out by its peculiar brilliancy.

368. *the occurrents . . . which have solicited* : the events which have prompted me to give him my dying voice.

375. *This quarry cries on havoc* : this scene of death announces an indiscriminate slaughter.

376. *in thine eternal cell*. *Eternal* is used here "to express extreme abhorrence." Compare Cæsar i 2 160 ; Othello iv 2 130.

Hamlet is the most famous and the most interesting of plays because it is the most perfect transcript of human experience. The central idea of the tragedy, — that which makes the play tragic throughout its entire structure, irrespective of the final catastrophe, — is a defect or paralysis of will, existing in a nature otherwise superbly gifted and adapted to win our admiration and love. This keynote of the play we are by no means left to infer solely from the development of the story. We find it formulated for us in every possible shape and in the speeches of the most dissimilar personages. Moreover, Hamlet knows and bewails his weakness. He avows it again and again, names it distinctly, resolves to overcome it, — always in vain.

But though in *Hamlet* the poet takes such pains to have us kept constantly aware of the tragic motive of the drama, so that the moral of the play is obvious and the purpose of the action intelligible, it remains to be said that no other masterpiece of literature presents so many problems that cannot be solved. The man *Hamlet* is discussed by modern critics quite as if he were a historical character, about whom investigation might bring to light some new data. The mysteries of the play are caused by the insistence of readers upon finding in it the exactness of a chronicle. Just as the professor of rhetoric requires his pupils to draw up a formal plan before beginning the essay, so we are apt to think Shakespeare saw his characters distinct in every detail, as if he had known them in life and recognized some sort of duty of historical accuracy in drawing his portraits.

We must remember that a play is meant to be presented to the public on the stage, to address the eye as well as the ear. The poet avails himself of the possibilities of scenic illusion. Shakespeare's audiences loved to see plays, and probably read them but little. Books were few, and persons able to read were also few. The modern custom of careful editing for readers, and of minute criticism of details, was utterly unknown. The fate of a play was its fate in the theatre.

The modern editor is superior to scenic illusion, and so sees the play in a light never contemplated by the poet. Because the play is great and admirable, he is apt to think it must be consistent in minutest detail, could we only view it aright. Hence editors take sides on *Hamlet* questions, array passage against passage, and show a partisan zeal, such as we usually think of only in connection with politics or religion.

But the *Hamlet* questions cannot be settled; and the reason of this impossibility is the fact that they were either never raised, or, at any rate, were never settled, by the poet himself, whose creation *Hamlet* is.

Chief among the unsettled problems of *Hamlet* criticism is the question whether *Hamlet* is insane. It is a veritable question, and has two sides. Does not *Hamlet* sometimes, as towards Ophelia, carry to unnecessary and cruel lengths his counterfeiting of mental

disease? The topic is an interesting one to discuss. A *résumé* of the literature of the subject may be found in Furness. A second reading of the play may be profitably undertaken, with the view of collecting data bearing on the question of Hamlet's responsibility for his acts. But it must be remembered that the question, — is Hamlet insane — resolves itself finally into the form, — did Shakespeare mean to represent Hamlet as being insane? The man Hamlet is simply the figure that acts and speaks in this play. Critics often speak of him, of his sayings and doings, in the past tense, as if he at some time had a natural life on earth, and were now dead.

Another question concerns Hamlet's *age*. At the beginning of the play he intends to go back to school in Wittenberg. At the end of the play he is thirty years old. Collect all the data afforded by the play that suggest inferences as to his age at the time being. Consider whether we are justified in assuming that Shakespeare had in mind in his hero a man of definite age. See note on v 1 176 as to the way in which the *thirty years* and the *Yorick* passages are to be accounted for.

Closely connected with the problem of Hamlet's age is that of the *time* occupied by the play. Is it thinkable that the play is to be conceived as having duration enough to allow the hero to grow up from school age to thirty years? Do we find the lapse of time clearly marked? Passages that imply rapid movement of events, and passages that call for indefinite allowance of time, may be brought together with the object of attaining some satisfactory conclusion. This has been done with infinite pains, but with shadowy results. Did the events of the drama take place in *time*, any more than they took place at Elsinore? The actual Elsinore has no such scenery as does the Elsinore of the play. The poet is quite as wanton with his times as with his places.

Again, the idea has been broached, by critics of some note, that Hamlet is mistakenly conceived as a man of defective will, and that he is much rather a hero, of intense energy and of great executive force, who simply cannot carry out the ghost's injunction to kill the king, as he can devise no way of proving to the Danish public the justice of his cause. This view of Hamlet's

inaction ascribes it to objective causes,—he is ever ready to act, but finds no opportunity. The common view ascribes his inaction to subjective causes,—he has opportunities, but is never ready. The fact is, Hamlet still has friends who resent, almost as a personal affront, the imputation to their hero of any defect of character.

Composition-Rhetoric for Use in Secondary Schools.

By Professors F. N. SCOTT, of the University of Michigan, and J. V. DENNEY, of Ohio State University. 12mo, cloth, 370 pages. Price, \$1.00.

IN the preparation of this work the authors have been guided by three considerations.

First, it is desirable that a closer union than has hitherto prevailed be brought about between secondary composition and secondary rhetoric. The rhetoric which is found in this book is meant to be the theory of the pupil's practice.

Second, it is desirable in secondary composition that greater use be made of the paragraph than has hitherto been done. In this book the paragraph is made the basis of a systematic method of instruction.

A third idea which underlies the work is the idea of growth. A composition is regarded not as a dead form, to be analyzed into its component parts, but as a living product of an active, creative mind.

In working out these ideas, care has been taken to provide illustrative material of a kind that should be thought-provoking, interesting, and valuable in itself, but not too far above the standard of literary practice.

Professor Sophie C. Hart, *Wellesley College, Wellesley, Mass.*: As a whole I consider it the best book on English Composition for the preparatory school, and shall recommend it to all teachers who send students to Wellesley.

Superintendent Mark S. W. Jefferson, *Lexington, Mass.*: The only rational book on the subject that I know. Apart from the practical manner of approaching the subject, I am delighted with the material chosen for the illustration of principles; pupils will find enjoyment in every paragraph.

Miss Harriet L. Mason, *Drexel Institute, Philadelphia, Pa.*: I find it all that I could wish. The book fills a unique place in English text-books, and is in the very van of the best teaching of composition. I shall use it during the coming year.

Professor Robert Herrick, *University of Chicago, Chicago, Ill.*: It is really a long stride in the right direction. It throws overboard much useless rubbish contained in the secondary school rhetoric, and teaches explicitly how to get material, how to arrange it, and how to present it.

Studies in English Composition.

By HARRIET C. KEELER, High School, Cleveland, Ohio, and EMMA C. DAVIS, Cleveland, Ohio. 12mo, cloth, 210 pages. Price, 80 cents.

THIS book is the outgrowth of experience in teaching composition, and the lessons which it contains have all borne the actual test of the class-room. Intended to meet the wants of those schools which have composition as a weekly exercise in their course of study, it contains an orderly succession of topics adapted to the age and development of high school pupils, together with such lessons in language and rhetoric as are of constant application in class exercises.

The authors believe that too much attention cannot be given to supplying young writers with good models, which not only indicate what is expected, and serve as an ideal toward which to work, but stimulate and encourage the learner in his first efforts. For this reason numerous examples of good writing have been given, and many more have been suggested.

The primal idea of the book is that the pupil learns to write by writing; and therefore that it is of more importance to get him to write than to prevent his making mistakes in writing. Consequently, the pupil is set to writing at the very outset; the idea of producing something is kept constantly uppermost, and the function of criticism is reserved until after something has been done which may be criticised.

J. W. Stearns, *Professor of Pedagogy, University of Wisconsin*: It strikes me that the author of your "Studies in English Composition" touches the gravest defect in school composition work when she writes in her preface: "One may as well expect a sea-anemone to show its beauty when grasped in the hand, as look for originality in a child, hampered by the conviction that every sentence he writes will be dislocated in order to be improved." In order to improve the beauty of the body we drive out the soul in our extreme formal criticisms of school compositions. She has made a book which teaches children to write by getting them to write often and freely; and if used with the spirit which has presided over the making of it, it will prove a most effective instrument for the reform of school composition work.

Albert G. Owen, *Superintendent, Afton, Iowa*: It is an excellent text. I am highly pleased with it. The best of the kind I have yet seen.

From Milton to Tennyson.

Masterpieces of English Poetry. Edited by L. DU PONT SYLE, University of California. 12mo, cloth, 480 pages. Price, \$1.00.

IN this work the editor has endeavored to bring together within the compass of a moderate-sized volume as much narrative, descriptive, and lyric verse as a student may reasonably be required to read critically for entrance to college. From the nineteen poets represented, only such masterpieces have been selected as are within the range of the understanding and the sympathy of the high school student. Each masterpiece is given complete, except for pedagogical reasons in the cases of Thomson, Cowper, Byron, and Browning. Exigencies of space have compelled the editor reluctantly to omit Scott from this volume. The copyright laws, of course, exclude American poets from the scope of this work.

The following poets are represented :—

- MILTON**, by the L'Allegro, Il Penseroso, Lycidas, and a Selection from the Sonnets.
DRYDEN . . . Epistle to Congreve, Alexander's Feast, Character of a Good Parson.
POPE . . . Epistles to Mr. Jervas, to Lord Burlington, and to Augustus.
THOMSON . . Winter.
JOHNSON . . Vanity of Human Wishes.
GRAY . . . Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard, and The Bard.
GOLDSMITH . . Deserted Village.
COWPER . . Winter Morning's Walk.
BURNS . . . Cotter's Saturday Night, Tam O'Shanter, and a Selection from the Songs.
COLERIDGE . . Ancient Mariner.
BYRON . . . Isles of Greece, and Selections from Childe Harold, Manfred, and the Hebrew Melodies.
KEATS . . . Eve of St. Agnes, Ode to a Nightingale, Sonnet on Chapman's Homer.
SHELLEY . . . Euganean Hills, The Cloud, The Skylark, and the Two Sonnets on the Nile.
WORDSWORTH . . Laodamia, The Highland Girl, Tintern Abbey, The Cuckoo, The Ode to a Skylark, The Milton Sonnet, The Ode to Duty, and the Ode on the Intimations of Immortality.
MACAULAY . . Horatius.
CLOUGH . . . Two Ships, the Prologue to the *Mari Magno*, and the Lawyer's First Tale.
ARNOLD . . The Scholar-Gypsy and the Forsaken Merman.
BROWNING . . Transcript from Euripides (Balaustion's Adventure).
TENNYSON . . Enone, Morte D'Arthur, The Miller's Daughter, and a Selection from the Songs.





The Academy

OF

English Classics.

UNIFORM WITH THIS VOLUME.

ADDISON.	De Coverley Papers.	S. THURBER.
MATTHEW ARNOLD.	Essays in Criticism.	S. S. CHERIDAN.
BURKE.	On Conciliation with the Colonies.	C. B. BRADLEY.
CARLYLE.	Essay on Burns.	H. W. BOYNTON.
	Essay on Johnson.	
MACAULAY.	Essay on Addison.	S. THURBER.
	Essay on Chatham.	
	Essay on Clive.	
	Essay on Milton.	
	Essay on Johnson.	
MILTON.	Essay on Warren Hastings.	
SHAKESPEARE.	Paradise Lost, Books I., II.	H. W. BOYNTON.
	Julius Cæsar.	S. THURBER.
	Macbeth.	
	Merchant of Venice.	
	As You Like It.	
	Hamlet.	
L. D. SYLE (Editor).	Four English Poems. The Rape of the Lock, John Gilpin's Ride, The Prisoner of Chillon, and Rugby Chapel.	
WEBSTER.	Reply to Hayne.	C. B. BRADLEY.

Other volumes in preparation.

ALLYN AND BACON, PUBLISHERS,

nt St., BOSTON.

378, Wabash Ave., CHICAGO.

